



**Arnold Hill  
Academy**

# **PUPIL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Status:	Adopted	
Version No: 2	Date adopted by full Governors:	
Named staff Document Manager: S Garrad	Governors Sub Committee responsible: SW	
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	Public facing Webpage	Yes
	Issue at Induction	No

## **The Statement**

**The academy intends to encourage and maintain a good level of attendance in all years**

Arnold Hill Academy Pupil Attendance Policy has the following further intentions:-  
to enhance achievement levels and external examination results;  
to carry out the school's legal responsibilities efficiently to report annually to parents;  
to clarify the responsibilities of different concerned parties;  
to identify tactics that will be effective in the achievement of the above.

These fit in with the broader school values – inclusivity, caring, respect, achievement, being positive.

Regular attendance at school is a prerequisite for student achievement. Absence, whether it be long-term, frequent or occasional, leads to missed experiences, and may cause fractured social relationships, which encourage an increased pattern of non-attendance.

Fostering good attendance is shared responsibility of school, the parent, and the LA, Family Services. Parents have a responsibility to see that their children receive the appropriate education, and it is the responsibility of the LA to ensure that this happens.

In detailing the strategies the school will undertake to ensure improved levels of attendance the importance of the following factors which encourage high levels of attendance must be kept in mind.

delivering a curriculum, which is relevant, motivating and differentiated to the needs of the students.

maintaining high expectations (communicated by staff in a variety of ways including punctuality, homework, marking, and extra curricular activities);

employing systems of reward for achievement, personal as well as academic; using sympathetic re-integration strategies for long-term absentees.

The policy will be addressed under a number of headings:

Collection of Data

Use of Data

PAM (Pupil Attendance Monitoring)

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Follow Up

Lateness and truancy

Rewards

Rights and responsibilities of parents

Targeting less than 90% attendance

Family Services

Re-integration of long-term absentees

## **COLLECTION OF DATA**

### **Registration**

An accurate and consistent registration system to both school and lessons is essential. The following practice should be adopted:

***Students should be on site by 0830 and moving to their tutor rooms when they hear the bell.***

### **Start of Sessions**

AM registration is from 8.35 – 9.00 a.m.

PM registration is managed through p4 lesson Registration 1.15 p.m.

Students should be on site by 08.30 am. A pupil is late when he/she arrives after 8.35 a.m. Form Tutors are responsible for marking pupils late until 9.00 a.m.

Students arrive after 9.00 a.m. must sign in late at the Pupil Support Unit (Student Support).

Absences (authorised or unauthorised) are to be indicated using the appropriate symbols.

Students who arrive late will be given a slip and expected to attend a detention on that day with their Head of Year. If they do not attend this they will get an SLT detention.

We are aware that sometimes students are late for reason including medical and issues where a bus hasn't arrived. If the child has been to a medical appointment – a note from parents should be brought and handed over. If the bus was an issue we will advise the bus company of this and ask that you do so as well. We will check if buses are late with NCT and if proven this lateness will not be sanctioned. Heads of Year may also seek alternative strategies such as contact home with parents. This can be done in conjunction with the PSU (Student Support).

### **During Lessons**

For each lesson the class teacher is required to keep a record of attendance/lateness. It is important that the class teacher enters late arrivals and re-saves the register. A culture of challenging pupils missing from previous lessons enables pupils to see effectiveness of the lesson monitoring.

Lateness to period 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 – if a student arrives later than the majority of the class they will be marked late on the register.

Students who are persistently late to lessons in school will receive the following:

- 3 late marks week – HOY detention 30 min
- 6 late marks per week -SLT detention 60 min

Students who are persistently late in the first few weeks of school will be placed on tutor report for two weeks and will have a review meeting with their tutor, where if significant improvements have been seen – they will be able to come off report. A lack of improvement will mean they move up to their HOY report.

## **USE OF DATA**

The efficient and speedy collation of the data is essential to the development of effective strategies for action. Data is required to monitor:

- individual absence and lateness to both school and lessons
- patterns of lateness and absence, and the identification of trends by the Attendance Officer and Head of Year.

## **PAM (Pupil Attendance Monitoring)**

PAM is the early intervention programme for students who have trends in their attendance and fall between 95 - 90% attendance. PAM involves the Head of Year working closely with the attendance officer tracking the identified student's attendance on a weekly basis to implement suitable interventions should their attendance continue to decrease.

The attendance officer will inform parents/carers via letter if their child is to be monitored on PAM. We welcome all contact from parents on how we can further support the child's attendance.

Attendance is reviewed at the end of the monitoring period and decision made as to whether monitoring continues or case passed to Attendance Officer or (Family Services).

### **PAM – Pupil Attendance Monitoring**

- Staged approach over a 6 week period as before any referral can be made to Family Services for support
  - o Stage 1 – call from your child's tutor – to say well done for their attendance and /or check everything is okay, highlight the dip and can we support – monitor attendance for 2 weeks then
  - o Stage 2 – letter home from HOY– to thank and/or check everything is okay – can we support? Then monitor for a further 2 weeks with intervention if needed then
  - o Stage 3 – meeting with HOY – to discuss and explain step if not improve
  - o At 92% the attendance officer will become involved to try and avoid a PA earlier on.

## **AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Authorised absence is where the school accepts there is good reason for an absence. An authorised absence requires a written communication from the parent/carer. Verbal or telephone messages are acceptable in the first instance but should ideally be followed up with a written note or email.

Unauthorised absence is any absence which does not fall into the following categories:

- (a) An absence caused by illness or other unavoidable cause.
- (b) An absence for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.
- (c) There is no acceptable transport and the school is not within walking distance.
- (d) Annual holidays (maximum two weeks only in exceptional circumstances), on completion of relevant permission forms, 4 weeks prior to the absence.
- (e) Situations where the school authorises absence e.g. study leave, work experience, interviews and special occasions e.g. weddings.
- (f) Medical appointments.

Unacceptable reasons for absence:

- Truancy
- Minding the house/caring for younger siblings
- Shopping
- No school uniform incorrect shoes
- To do homework/coursework
- Lateness
- Holidays in term time
- Headaches/Coughs/Colds
- Birthday
- Friendship problems
- Family/friends visiting

## **FOLLOW UP FOR PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS**

There is a range of situations to which the school needs to respond:

unauthorised or unexplained absence;  
unexplained absence  
a pattern of absence, with parental notes, over a period of weeks;  
unexplained absence from lessons during a session.

It is important that parents/carers are aware of absences and lateness, and of their responsibility to account for all such events, and that all action taken is documented by relevant member of staff concerned.

Action to be taken in the first instance is to contact the parent/carer by:

- The Form Tutor requesting an absence note from the pupil followed by
- A telephone call by PSU of which a written minute is produced

Action will be taken by:

Initially

Form Tutor

subsequently

Head of Year or PSU making contact with parent / carer

persistent infringements Referral to Attendance Officer

Meeting with Attendance Officer and / or Head of Year

The Head of Year has responsibility to co-ordinate a year team's attendance and punctuality programme. This should include:

- Monitoring team data
- Following up to internal assessment reporting points – letters of praise / concern.
  - Promoting consistency among tutor team
  - Liaising with PSU
  - Liaising with the Attendance Officer
  - Reporting to the Assistant Head teacher – Behaviour.

This will be done on a half termly basis

### **LATENESS AND TRUANCY**

Persistent lateness and truancy are often a significant indicator of under-achievement.

Lateness to school, or lateness to lessons and truancy, must be acted upon and parents made fully aware of the school's expectations concerning punctuality.

Dealing with lateness and truancy to school is a year team responsibility;  
Dealing with lateness to particular lessons is a curriculum area's responsibility;  
Persistent lateness and truancy should be identified by the Heads of Year/ Curriculum Leaders through their regular monitoring and acted upon by them.

The appropriateness of sanctions, including detentions or communication home, to encourage prompt attendance and truancy needs to be applied consistently across the school. The triggers for particular forms of action also need to be understood.

The Heads of Year together with PSU and Attendance Officer, can use the following strategy to help improve punctuality and truancy.

- Identify a half termly monitoring programme.
- Inform pupils through assemblies.
- At the end of each fortnight identify truants and pupils who are late. Follow up with letter home
  - standard available
  - detention
  - one to one conversation with form tutors
  - Punctuality report

### **REWARDS**

The importance of good attendance should be regularly promoted by every member of staff.

In years 7-11 good attendance, where the pupil achieved the attendance target of 96% (outstanding) and above they will be rewarded.

Those students who achieve 100% attendance throughout the academic year may also receive an attendance award at the half termly Shining Brightly assembly. (see appendix 2 for types of rewards).

On a termly basis there will be a rewards breakfast for those students who continue to have high standards of attendance 95% or above.

## **PARENTS**

Parents have a responsibility for ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually. The school will work with parents to find opportunities to share information about attendance. Parents have a right to be provided in good time with the necessary information from the school which would enable them to meet these obligations. This includes:

- the times of the school day
- school dates and holidays
- school procedures relating to attendance and punctuality
- school expectations regarding lateness
- prompt communication of matters causing concern.

The school expects that all parents communicate with the school in writing giving a reason:

- (i) in advance of any planned absence;
- (ii) immediately following (the next session) any unplanned absence;
- (iii) during any absence expected to last more than 3 days. (See appendix 3 for leave of absence application form).

Parents who do not conform to the above will be contacted and requested to provide an explanation of their child's absence.

Further non-compliance on the part of the parents will be documented and acted upon by the Attendance Officer .

Following DfES Guidelines on what may be authorised / not authorised a summary has been produced for tutors (see appendix 3).

## **TARGETING LESS THAN 90% ATTENDANCE**

To support and encourage attendance Arnold Hill Academy also targets pupils in 90% and below range, using the following procedure:.

On a weekly basis, attendance of pupils is checked. Pupils who have attendance below 90% are identified by the school's data systems. The Attendance Officer eliminate any pupils who have legitimate reasons for poor attendance e.g. long term illness.

Concern is then raised with parents highlighting the links between attendance and achievement and raising concerns. The Attendance Officer may meet with the student individually.

Should there be little or no improvement without good reason, and attendance has dropped to below 90% (6 sessions/3 days of unauthorised absence) over a rolling six week period, a referral will be made to **The Family Service** – this is the first step towards Local Authority involvement and possible legal action against the parents. Individual cases are allocated to a Case Manager who will work with parents in developing an Action Plan towards improving attendance to avoid legal action by the Local authority. Regular contact will be kept with the Case Manager allocated by The Family Service and documentation and evidence will be passed on towards the legal proceedings.

## **THE FAMILY SERVICE**

Much of the Local Authority's responsibilities to the school in the area of attendance is currently vested in The Family Service.

Family Service Case Managers provide an important bridge between home and school, by working with families to try to establish any underlying reasons for poor attendance and punctuality.

For this partnership to be effective it is important that the school and its Attendance Officer share a common agenda. Arnold Hill Academy will look at pupils' attendance below 90% with Attendance Officer. It is appropriate that The Family Service is brought in at the stage where Head of Year /Attendance Officer/Parent discussions at school have not led to any significant improvement in attendance at school or such discussions cannot be initiated. To facilitate this work it is essential that all action is clearly documented.

## **RE-INTEGRATION**

When long-term absentees return to school it is important that they are sympathetically treated by all staff.

Re-integration often fails because it is unplanned; the student is sent back to his/her original timetable as if nothing has happened. Staff should be reminded to be sensitive, confine any remarks about the absence to 1:1 situations and to bear in mind the context of the attendance issue.

For each student, the Head of Year should liaise with others to draw up a re-integration action plan. This plan will acknowledge the reasons for the student's absence, and may involve a reduced timetable in the first instance and temporary additional support within inclusion.

All staff who teach the student need to be advised in advance of an anticipated return so that they can plan how to re-introduce the student to their scheme of work. Flexible achievement programme needs to be considered at KS4 to ensure pupil achieves grades and progression post 16.

## **ROLES CHECKLIST**

### **The Form Tutor**

To be ready to take the register at 8.40 a.m. and to attend to the wider legal responsibilities of registration.

### **School Attendance Officer**

Meets weekly with Heads of Year to review attendance data and identify students meet threshold for intervention.

Information shared with Heads of Year

Follow up long term unexplained absences with letter.

Call parents of pupils as agreed with Heads of Year

Makes home visits or invites parents into school

Meets with students to discuss their attendance and offers support with any barriers to attendance.

Maintain chronology of intervention for possible Court action at a later date.

Referral to Family Services for identified students where school based intervention has failed.

Discussion of action plans with Heads of Year, regarding improving attendance (normally this will be where a pupil is school phobic).

### **Pastoral Support Unit**

To administer school late system and sign pupils in/out of school.

To record detentions and other sanctions.

To contact parents to identify reasons for absence.

To inform Heads of Year / Attendance Officer on matters of concern.

### **Head of Year**

To liaise weekly with the Attendance Officer to identify students causing concern through PAM.

To discuss with students and parents re unsatisfactory attendance/behaviour and agree improvement strategies.

To promote attendance a regular positive feature of year assemblies.

To reward attendance half termly in Year 7-11.

Systems for supporting and celebrating regular attendance and punctuality at Arnold Hill Academy include

Strategy	Actions	By Whom	Celebrate
1. Vigilance – keep a watchful eye on attendance trends, follow procedures and be proactive not reactive.	Scrutinise weekly: overall attendance, by year, by day, by gender. Map outcomes to proceeding weeks. Let everyone know trends and expectations.	FT HoY AO	Reward tutor groups, cohorts, pupils and staff.
2. Expectation of consistency and accuracy when marking registers.	Ensure that all staff are informed and trained in the standards required for taking and marking a register. This includes temporary staff. Issue a bulleted summary sheet for reference. Speak to individual Staff as appropriate.	SLT AO	Use staff briefings to share information.
3. Model an expectation of punctuality from the whole-school community.	Items in Arnold Hill Academy Staff Bulletin	All Staff HoY	All staff to acknowledge and praise pupils for punctuality. Carry out year group spot check and give feedback to pupils. Subject leaders acknowledge good practice in the team.
4. Regularly praise high levels of attendance and improved attendance.	Keep attendance high on the agenda. Use assemblies, parents' evenings, letters to parents/carers. Report system to monitor attendance issues.	FT HoY	Issue certificates celebrating parent/carer and pupil partnership for maintaining/improving attendance.
5. Use opportunities to correlate regular attendance to academic achievement.	When pupils achieve academically, reinforce regular attendance as key reason. Information on display around school.	FT HoY AO SLT	Use assemblies and parents' evenings to reinforce key messages and celebrate achievement in attendance and the impact on attainment.

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Celebrate</b>
6. Ensure that the attendance policy is understood by all staff including temporary staff and is applied consistently.	Provide a bulleted crib sheet with key points on attendance/punctuality protocols and expectations.	AO SGD	Monitor consistency and give positive feedback and praise to all staff.
7. Use every opportunity to demonstrate to pupils that staff care about and value their attendance. For example, staff show genuine concern when a pupil has been absent and offer support on their return.	Use every opportunity to build positive staff – pupil relationships. Pupils are absent from school for a variety of reasons. Seek to welcome and encourage, rather than draw attention to the absence.	All staff	Form Tutors and Subject teachers actively promote attendance. Praise as appropriate.
8. Offer extracurricular activities to tap into pupils' interests.	Provide a breakfast service to help nourish pupils in preparation for the day. Clubs and activities.	Catering Service & various staff	Acknowledge and praise regular attendance.

## APPENDIX 3

Dear Parent / Carer

You have requested a leave of absence form for your child. Would you please note that completion of the form does not automatically authorise an absence. Each request is considered individually. Please read the notes on the reverse of the form.

Every school's attendance figures are now carefully monitored by the Local Authority and DfE. We are required to demonstrate our efforts to ensure students attend school. We do this by working closely with the Local Authority's Early Help Service (Targeted Support).

A concern for us both as a school and the DfE is the number of days lost to family holidays in term time. We appreciate the reasons why families do this but also accept that detrimental effect this has on a child's attainment.

The Education (Pupil registration) (England) Regulations 2006, Amendment 2013, Section 7, Leave of Absence, Section, states:

*'A pupil may be granted leave of absence from the school to enable him/ her to go away on holiday where:*

- *An application has been made in advance to the head teacher by a parents with whom the child normally resides; and The Head Teacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to **'exceptional circumstances'** relating to that application.*
  
- *Under section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority may issue Penalty Notices to parents of children with unauthorised absences from school.*

Nottinghamshire County Council has stated that from September 2015 Penalty Notices can be issued if the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is above 6 sessions / 3 days over a rolling 6 week period.

There is no legal right for a parent to remove a child from school for family holidays and as Head teacher, I am not obliged to sanction any requests.

Yours sincerely

M Robertson  
Head of Academy



## **APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME**

Every day counts

Good attendance in school = good progress

Attached is an application form for you to request permission for your child to be absent from school to take part in a family holiday. Before completing the application form, please read these notes carefully:

- The law states that you do not have the right to take your child out of school for holidays during term time. The Local Education Authority works with schools to reduce the numbers of children missing school because of holidays taken in term time and schools can refuse your request to take your child out of school.
- If you wish to take your child on holiday during term time, you must apply for permission in writing using the attached form. Permission for authorised leave of absence may be granted for holidays totalling no more than 5 days in any school year, unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Please note the school year is from September to July.
- The Department for Children Schools and Families state that absence for holidays in term time due to the following reasons will not be authorised:
  - Availability of cheap holidays
  - Availability of desired accommodation
  - Poor weather experienced in the school holiday period
  - Overlap with beginning or end of term
  - Holidays booked before checking with the school
  - Day trips
- There are certain times of the year when a child may experience problems because of missing school. These include examination periods, at the time of starting a new school and at the start of a new school term. In deciding whether to authorise your child's absence and give permission for a holiday in term time, the school will take these and other factors into account.
- If the school refuse your application and you still take your child out of school the absences will be treated as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may lead to a Penalty Notice or a Summons being issued against you for irregular school attendance.

Having read these notes, if you still wish to apply for a leave of absence for your child to accompany you on holiday during term time then please complete the application attached. This form should be returned to school as far in advance of the proposed holiday as possible.



**APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME**

Please complete all sections below and return to [victoria.oldroyd@arnoldhillacademy.co.uk](mailto:victoria.oldroyd@arnoldhillacademy.co.uk). Consent for term time holidays will not be granted without a full description of special circumstances. The school requests that parents use the allocated school holiday period for vacations.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutor Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sibling's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tutor Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Home  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ First day of  
Absence: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Return to School: \_\_\_\_\_ Total number of  
school days missed:

**Special Circumstances, (reference to reading conditions of authorisation), of why you wish to remove your child from school for a holiday and why the school holiday period cannot be used)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Educational Benefits (please explain what educational benefits the holiday will bring to your child)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe what measures you intend to take to ensure that your child is not disadvantaged by missing essential elements of the curriculum**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*I make application for my child/children named above to have authorised absence from school for the reasons stated.*

*I understand that if this is not agreed, then any absence will be treated as unauthorised and may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice or a Summons for irregular school attendance.*

Name of Parent/Carer making application: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorised: [ ]      Unauthorised: [ ]      Reason:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Head Teacher

**PLEASE RETURN COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL GIVING AT LEAST 4 WEEKS' NOTICE OF INTENDED ABSENCE**

**Office use only:**

Attendance % current year: \_\_\_\_\_ Previous attendance %: \_\_\_\_\_

Holidays taken previously in term time: \_\_\_\_\_