



# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

## 2022-23

### PURPOSE

Excellent Attendance and Punctuality and reliable and robust systems for its monitoring and improvement are vital for students to achieve academic success and for their effective safeguarding.

The aims of Ark Soane Academy’s Attendance and Punctuality Policy are to highlight the importance of good Attendance and Punctuality and to set out the systems and expectations for achieving excellent outcomes for students in this area.

Date of last review:	n/a	Author:	Education Directors
Date of next review:	September 2023	Owner:	Education Directors
Type of policy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school	Approval:	Management Team
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### 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

## **1. Introduction**

All children of school age have the right to an efficient 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 Soane Academy takes the responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its students very seriously. It acknowledges that irregular attendance can disrupt continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement/low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within the academy.

We feel the whole academy community should take responsibility for attendance. Therefore, this policy seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of academy attendance are aware and informed.

## **2. Aims**

The aims of the Attendance Policy are:

- a) To raise the importance of good attendance in line with Ofsted requirements.
- b) Ensure that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.
- c) To improve punctuality.
- d) Promote opportunities to celebrate and reward children for attendance and punctuality achievements.

## **3. Guidelines**

### **3.1 Reasons for absence**

Parents and carers are asked to contact the academy office by phone or in person if their child needs to be absent from the academy. Contact should be made at the earliest possible opportunity and before 9am.

### **3.2 Authorised absences**

Acceptable reasons include sickness, hospital appointments, dentist appointments, recognised religious holidays (1 day per holiday only) and funerals. Medical appointments should be arranged outside of the academy day. Where this is not possible, we would expect students to miss only part of the day.

### **3.3 Unauthorised absences**

Unacceptable reasons include shopping, going to an appointment, visiting relatives, buying shoes, going for a haircut, parent/carer unwell and taking holiday, for example by acquiring cheaper flights outside of academy holidays.

### **3.4 Holidays/Trips**

The academy supports the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents/carers from taking holidays during term time.

3.5 Only the Principal can authorise absence. The Principal will not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances as the September 2013 amendments to registration regulations stipulate.

## **4. Action taken when students are absent**

4.1 There are occasions when absence is unavoidable. These include:

- a) Illness.
- b) Medical or education appointments.

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

4.3 If a child is ill, the parent or carer should ring the academy to inform us and on return present a written note explaining the absence.

4.4 The parent or carer will be phoned and if there is no answer or no information has been received, and reasons noted, a text message will be sent on the first day of absence.

4.5 Letters will be sent to the parent or carers requesting an explanation of the absence. If no reply is received; the absence is counted as unauthorised.

4.6 Where there are any cases of concern around students' absences the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed and a referral to other agencies may be made.

## **5. What happens if Attendance is unacceptable**

5.1 The Principal/Attendance Officer reviews the attendance of all students monthly. If the attendance of a student falls below 95% the reasons for the absence are investigated.

5.2 The reasons for absence are discussed. If there are no extenuating circumstances the following procedure is instigated:

- a) The Form tutor will phone home to talk to the parent or carer to raise concerns
- b) If there are further incidents of absence over the half-term the Head of Year will request an appointment with the parent or carer. Medical certificates will be requested to provide a reason for each subsequent absence to be authorised.
- c) If attendance still does not meet our requirements an appointment will be made where an attendance contract will be created in conjunction with the Vice Principal, parent/ carer and student.
- d) 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

*Ø See Appendix 1*

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

## **6. Lateness**

6.1 The academy day starts at 8.25 and all academy doors are closed at this time.

6.2 Students who arrive after this time must enter the academy through the main entrance. They must then be signed into the late book.

6.3 Registers will close at 8.50. 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.

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

- Form Tutor phones home to discuss the issue with parents/ carers. Student placed on punctuality report
- If no improvement is seen the Head of Year/Vice Principal will invite parents/ carers in for a meeting to discuss and agree strategies to reduce the frequency of lateness.
- If there are unacceptable improvements after a month, a referral to the Education Welfare Officer is made.
- A referral to the Early-Help Team will be made to support the family in conjunction with the EWO

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

## **7. How will absence and punctuality be monitored**

A register of absence and punctuality referral is kept. The Attendance Officer, Head of Year and the Vice Principal manage this register and meet regularly to decide necessary action.

## **8. Exceptional Leave**

If parents or carers need to remove their child from the academy for any reason, they must complete a Term Time Absence Request form. No absences for holidays will be authorised. Permission for absence will only be given if there are extreme extenuating circumstances. If the absence is not authorised, the parent or carer may be liable to a Fixed Penalty Notice.

## **9. 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 academy office are late and will be marked as such, even if the register has not been taken yet.

## **10. Rewards and Sanctions**

The house with the best attendance for the previous week is recognised and rewarded and presented with a cup in assembly.

Children with 100% attendance are presented with a certificate at the end of each half term. Children also receive house points for their respective houses for achieving 100% attendance. Certificates are also awarded for 100% punctuality. Further prizes and awards may be presented for attendance.

Sanctions in the form of reflections will be applied for lateness:

- Arrival 8.25-8.45: A 20 minute after-school reflection
- Arrival after 8.45: A 60 minute after-school reflection

## **APPENDIX 1 : PROCEDURE FOR THE ISSUE OF PENALTY NOTICES:**

1. Academies 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/carer, along with evidence of what measures they have taken to bring this matter to the parent's/carer's attention.
2. The LA will produce an information letter for distribution to all parents/carers whose children have been identified as falling below 95% attendance at their respective academies. 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.
3. Each student's attendance will be monitored for 15 academy 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.
4. Should the required improvement not take place and 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.
5. 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.
6. Following a change to advice issued by the DfES in recent months, Penalty Notices may now be issued to the parents/carers of all students registered at Ealing schools, irrespective of their actual home address. This also means that follow-up prosecutions where parents/carers fail to pay the Notice or to improve their children's attendance will extend to families resident outside the area.

### **Withdrawal of Penalty Notices:**

7. The LA will withdraw any Notices issued if:
  - a) It can be established that the Penalty Notice was issued to the wrong person.
  - b) The use of the Penalty Notice does not conform to the terms of the Protocol.
8. 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.
9. 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:**

10. Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the Penalty Notice.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. Any revenue arising from the issue of Penalty Notices will be retained by the LA to defray the costs involved in their issue or any subsequent prosecutions arising from non-payment.

### **Non Payment:**

14. Non payment of Penalty Notices within the prescribed time limits will result in a prosecution under Section (1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996 for the original offence of failing to ensure the regular attendance of the child/ren at school.