



Attendance Policy

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 – respect for the Academy, for learning and for themselves.

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 extracurricular 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
- Rewards
- Attendance and absence
- Authorised and unauthorised absence
- Pupil Attendance Monitoring (PAM)
- Punctuality
- Follow up for lateness and truancy
- Parental responsibility
- Targeting less than 90% attendance
- Family services
- Re-integration of long-term absentees
- Holidays

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.

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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 at/after 8.35 a.m. Form Tutors are responsible for marking pupils late until 9.00 a.m.
- Students arriving after 9.00 a.m. must sign in late at the Pupil Support Unit.
- Absences (authorised or unauthorised) are to be indicated using the appropriate symbols.
- Students who arrive late will be marked as late. Five late marks to school will see a detention of 60 minutes on a Thursday evening. Continued lateness will require a meeting with parents.
- We are aware that sometimes students are late for reasons including medical and issues where a bus hasn't arrived. If the child has been to a medical appointment evidence is required i.e. appointment card. If the bus was an issue please call the Pupil Support Unit so we can follow this up with the bus company.
- Contact home is made when your child is late to school by text/email.

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 the 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:

- Three late marks week – HOY detention 45 min
- Five late marks per week - 60 min detention on a Friday

Students who are persistently late 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. You may be asked to meet with the HOY to discuss.

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.

Rewards

The importance of good attendance should be regularly promoted by every member of staff. Having good attendance shows respect for learning, the Academy and themselves.

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

Star of the week – students will be picked at random to be a student of the week if they have 100% attendance and/or 100% punctuality.

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.

Contact home – those students with attendance at/above our expected levels will receive contact home.

Attendance and absence

At Arnold Hill Academy good attendance is 96% or more. This means that a student has not missed more than seven school days per year. Each school day counts as two sessions. Missing more than 38 sessions or 19 days means that your child may become a persistent absentee. This means that your child's attendance is a cause for concern at 90% attendance. Should this be the case we will have been in touch with you to discuss this prior to this being a concern.

Illness and First Day Call

If your child is unable to attend school through illness you should inform us by telephone on the first day of absence before 9.00 am. It is useful to know the expected day of return. If you do not supply us with this information we have a duty to contact you so that we may be sure of the child's whereabouts, as this is a safeguarding issue. Where your child is absent through illness or medical appointments this will normally be counted as authorised. Where we have concerns over excessive absence patterns through illness we will need to discuss this with parents in order to gain a better understanding of the problems and to offer support – for example, by involving the Healthy Families Team.

Medical/Dental Appointments

It is generally better if these can be arranged outside school hours, but we know this is not always possible. Where children need to attend such appointments during the school day it is important that parents inform the attendance officer via the attendance line. As an Academy we will not release students if we have not been informed by parents/carers. Students should sign out at PSU. Medical and dental appointments are authorised absences as long as evidence of these appointments are emailed to the attendance officer or shown at PSU when the student is signing out or back in. We do not authorise a full day of absence for a medical appointment, every effort should be made to attend school before or after the appointment, or, ideally, arrange appointments outside of the normal school day. Routine optician appointments are not authorised during school time as late and weekend appointments are available.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Authorised absence is where the school accepts there is good reason for an absence.

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

- An absence caused by illness or other unavoidable cause
- An absence for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong (one day per any religious observation, three days maximum per academic year)
- There is no acceptable transport and the school is not within walking distance
- Annual holidays (maximum two weeks only in exceptional circumstances), on completion of relevant permission forms, four weeks prior to the absence
- Situations where the school authorises absence e.g. study leave, work experience, and interviews
- Medical appointments

Unacceptable reasons for absence:

- Truancy
- Minding the house/caring for younger siblings
- Shopping
- No school uniform incorrect shoes
- To do homework/coursework

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- Lateness
- Holidays in term time
- Headaches/Coughs/Colds
- Birthday
- Friendship problems
- Family/friends visiting
- Period pains
- Caring for family members
- Days out for shows/theme park visits with family
- Being tired/under the weather
- Revision for exams

Penalty Notice

Where an absence is not authorised, a fixed penalty notice can be issued for **any unauthorised absences of 3.5 or more days (seven sessions) over a rolling six week period.**

It is the responsibility of the parent/carers to ensure that their child attends school and contacts the Academy if they are unable to attend. After three days of continued illness medical evidence is required by the Academy to authorise the continued absence, without supporting evidence the absence will be marked as unauthorised and you may be at risk of prosecution.

Pupil Attendance Monitoring (PAM)

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.

Parents will be informed via letter/email if their child is to be monitored on PAM. We welcome all contact from parents on how we can further support ***their*** child's attendance.

Attendance is reviewed at the end of the monitoring period, and a decision made as to whether monitoring continues or the case is passed to the ***Attendance Officer***.

PAM – Pupil Attendance Monitoring

Staged approach over a 6 week period before any referral can be made to Family Services for support

- Stage 1 – call/email 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 - attendance will be monitored for two weeks, then
- Stage 2 – letter/email home from HOY– to thank and/or check everything is okay – can we support further? This will then be monitored for a further two weeks with intervention if needed, then
- Stage 3 – meeting with HOY – to discuss and explain step if not improve
- At 92% the Attendance Officer will become involved to try and avoid a PA earlier on.

Punctuality

As an Academy being punctual is a part of the Arnold Hill Way and also shows respect for learning, respect for themselves and the Academy. 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.

Lateness to School

A student is late to school if they arrive after 08.35am. On the day an email message to say your child has been late to school will be sent. **Five late marks to school will see your child receive a 60 minute detention.** We are aware that sometimes students are late for reasons including medical and issues where a bus hasn't arrived. If the child has been to a medical appointment – an appointment card or letter should be brought and handed over when signing in at PSU. If the bus was late, we ask that you advise the bus company of this and inform the Academy. 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).

Lateness in/around School

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:

- Three late marks per week - HOY detention 45 minutes
- Five late marks per week - 60 min detention.

Students who are persistently late 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.

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 (please pass to the attendance officer) as well as,
- 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:

- Identify a half termly monitoring programme



- Inform pupils through assemblies
- Weekly follow up of lateness to lessons – through contact home, sanctions if needed, contact with tutor and teaching staff and punctuality report
- 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

This will be done on a half termly basis overall with weekly lateness overviews.

Parental responsibility

The Education Act 1996 states that parents/carers have the primary responsibility for ensuring that registered students of academy age attend the Academy regularly and punctually, and that they receive an education suitable for the aptitude and ability.

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 or phone call giving a reason:

- In advance of any planned absence;
- Immediately following (the next session) any unplanned absence;
- During any absence expected to last more than three 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 eliminates 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.



Students who are at risk of becoming a persistent absentee will be identified over a two week period and at each half term depending on the number of sessions missed. If a student's attendance is 92% or lower parents will be contacted by the Attendance Officer to try and prevent them from becoming a persistent absentee. Attendance will be monitored, advice and support to improve attendance will be given to encourage attendance improvements.

Should there be little or no improvement without good reason, and attendance has dropped to below 90% (seven sessions/3.5 days of unauthorised absence) over a rolling six week period, a referral will be made to the Local Authority and possible legal action will be taken against the parents.

Family services

If the Academy feels that the parent and child require support from outside agencies a referral will be made to the Family Service. Both parent and child need to consent to this referral.

An initial assessment takes place and a Case Manager is allocated to the family they 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. 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

Early Help Assessment Form

An Early Help Assessment Form (EHAF) can be used where there are concerns about a child's attendance. This can be used to assess need, plan interventions and to make onward referral for other services if required. **ONLY STUDENTS IN THE COUNTY; CITY STUDENTS GET REFERRED STRAIGHT TO THE ENFORCEMENT TEAM**

Re-integration

When long-term absentees return to school it is important that they are sympathetically treated by all staff and that a plan is in place to support them.

For each student, the Head of Year/Attendance Officer 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 or Ramsey House.

Re-integration is often unsuccessful 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.

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.

Holidays

Academy policy stipulates that holidays may be authorised:

- Where families are service personnel
- Where family needs to spend time together to support each other during/after a crisis
- Other compassionate circumstances confidentially shared with the Academy Parents/ guardians are not entitled to remove children from the Academy for holidays or for any other reason as a right. Moreover, the Academy will not automatically authorise holidays simply on the grounds of a parent/guardian being unable to take time off from their employment during the Academy's holidays



Arnold Hill will not authorise absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. These circumstances are:

- Where families are service personnel;
- Where a family needs to spend time together to support each other during/after a crisis;
- Other compassionate circumstances confidentially shared with the Academy;
- Where a student has been offered an exceptional opportunity outside of school.

Parents/guardians may apply for exceptional leave of absence by writing to the Principal at least four weeks before the planned absence (including before the planned holiday is booked). Holidays will not be granted retrospectively, based on an existing booking. The application letter must outline precisely what the exceptional circumstances are.



APPENDIX 1

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 regarding 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.



APPENDIX 2

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

Strategy	Actions	By Whom	Celebrate
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.
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.
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.
Regularly praise high levels of attendance and improved attendance.	Keep attendance high on the agenda. Use assemblies, parents' evenings and letters to parents/carers. Report system to monitor attendance issues.	FT HoY	Issue certificates celebrating parent/carer and pupil partnership for maintaining/improving attendance.
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.
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.
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.
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

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.

Issued by Nottinghamshire Education Welfare Service 2008



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. 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: _____