



Attendance Policy

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| Adopted by governing body | Summer 2020 |
| Next full review due | Summer 2022 |
| Review frequency | Two-Yearly |
| Key individual | Jo Mahoney - Senior Assistant Head Pastoral and Wellbeing |

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|---|
| 2. Related policies and relevant DfE guidelines | 3 |
| 3. The importance of regular attendance | 3 |
| 4. Promoting regular attendance | 3 |
| 5. Types of absence | 4 |
| Authorised absences | 4 |
| Unauthorised absences | 5 |
| 6. Holidays in term time | 6 |
| 7. Persistent Absenteeism (PA) | 6 |
| 8. Absence procedures | 7 |
| What parents must do: | 7 |
| What the school will do: | 7 |
| 9. Tracking and monitoring systems for attendance | 7 |
| School admin team | 7 |
| Heads of year | 7 |
| 10. Barnet's Education Welfare Team | 8 |
| 11. Punctuality | 8 |
| Lateness procedures | 8 |
| Tracking and monitoring of punctuality | 9 |

1. Introduction

The Archer Academy aims to be a safe and nurturing environment which enables all members of the school community to realise their potential. There is a strong link between school attendance and educational outcomes. For our students to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and punctually, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. We aim for all students to have attendance of 97% and we are committed to working closely with students, families, local authorities, and external agencies to meet this target.

This Policy sets out how, by school and home working together, we will promote good attendance and punctuality for each student and act early to address any patterns of absence.

2. Related policies and relevant DfE guidelines

School attendance is subject to various education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by The Department for Education (DfE).

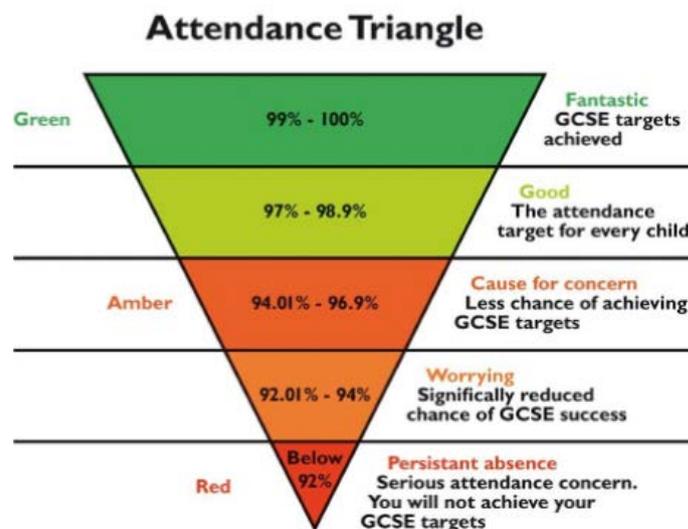
Most notably, this policy draws on guidance from the 1996 Education Act, [School attendance parental responsibility measures Jan 2015](#), [DfE July 2019 school attendance guidance](#)

This policy is reinforced by other school policies and should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour and Rewards and Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

3. The importance of regular attendance

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning and leave them less likely to realise their potential. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines and may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is the legal responsibility of the parent. Permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.



4. Promoting regular attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – the school, parents and students. We believe that working in partnership is the crucial ingredient to the success and happiness of all our students. On joining school, the student and their family enter into The Archer Academy Home School Partnership, which outlines the responsibilities we all have to ensure that each student realises their potential, including attendance and punctuality.

The Archer Academy and its staff will:

- Deliver a positive educational experience and safe environment for children which encourages good attendance
- Comply with legal requirements for recording and reporting attendance
- Track and monitor attendance through robust systems and record-keeping
- Promote the importance of regular attendance and punctuality to students and parents through clear and consistent communication including: the Home School Partnership; the weekly newsletter; termly reports to parents linking attendance and punctuality to progress and attainment; workshops and events and reminders of the school systems to record absence
- Celebrate and reward good attendance by displaying individual and tutor group achievements in assemblies, letters home, 100% attendance awards and star of the week, competitions and achievements codes, trips/events.
- Provide support through Learning Mentors where attendance may be an emerging barrier to school success.
- Follow up attendance issues with students and parents as necessary
- Provide work and support to students who have an expected long-term absence for medical reasons

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually
- Inform the school of the reason of any absence by 9.30am via telephone
- Ensure the school authorises any leave of absence including those for medical appointments, well in advance.
- Avoid taking their child out of school during term time

Students are expected to:

- Arrive at school each day on time
- Be punctual to and attend all their lessons
- Not leave the premises without permission
- Aim for 100% attendance

5. Types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either *authorised* or *unauthorised*. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing. Parents are requested to inform the school office in advance, of any planned unavoidable absence. A member of the school admin team is designated to lead on attendance.

Authorised absences

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, religious observance, and medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Parents are actively encouraged to make medical appointments outside of school time as far as is possible.

Exceptional circumstances where absence may be authorised during term time, at the

discretion of the headteacher include:

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling – the headteacher will use their discretion having heard from parents about travel and funeral arrangements and taking into account the distance to be travelled
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Serious illness of a close relative – only if headteacher is satisfied that the circumstances are truly exceptional
- Teenage parents responsible for the care of their own child – at the headteacher's discretion.
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement – as appropriate.
- Time-off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by Education Social Work Service. Unless the headteacher believes a child's education will be seriously affected, in which case there will be a discussion with the Local Authority.
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states "on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs".
- Shielding or absence due to COVID19 related symptoms

Each case will be addressed on its individual merits, considering the overall welfare of the child.

Unauthorised absences

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. These include:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy.
- Unexplained absences.
- Arrival after the closure of registers (8.40am).
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. We recognise that problems with attendance can be related to other challenges that students and families are facing and will work together to address those. Parents are encouraged, in the spirit of working together; to contact their child's form tutor or Head of Year if they feel their child is reluctant to attend school for any reason. Parents are encouraged to never cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending; but to contact school immediately and discuss any concerns. Parents condoning absence from school can give the impression that attendance does not matter and this can and does usually make things worse.

6. Holidays in term time

Absence during term time for holidays interrupts continuity of teaching and learning, disrupts the educational progress of individual children and creates disruption in school. We actively discourage parents from arranging holidays during term time and will only authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.

Parents do not have any right to expect term time leave to be granted and all leave is granted at the discretion of the headteacher. Any request for absence during the term must be made in writing to the headteacher. Parents must not assume that a request for absence will be automatically granted. The headteacher will inform parents if the request is refused.

Leave for the purpose of a family holiday will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Holidays taken without authorisation, are recorded as unauthorised absence, and may be referred to the Education Welfare Team.

As a rule, cost of holidays does not constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Leave will not be given if the planned absence coincides with the start of term, or is near to or coincides with tests, exams or other significant events in the school calendar.

7. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects. We seek parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle any issues of persistent absenteeism or where we become concerned that a child may be in danger of becoming classified as a persistent absentee.

We monitor all absences thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and placed on an attendance contract. Our attendance contracts may also be combined with academic mentoring where absence is affecting progress and attainment.

All our PA students and their parents are subject to an attendance contract which works as an action plan to improve attendance. The plan may include: allocation of additional support through a mentor, referrals to in school interventions or external agencies.

All PA cases are automatically made known to the Education Welfare Officer from the London Borough of Barnet who can intervene with all students regardless of their borough of residence.

8. Absence procedures

What parents must do:

- **Contact** the school office, before 9.30am, on the first day of absence and each day of subsequent absence.
- **Send** a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence – parents must do this even if they have already telephoned the school. This note should be given to the child's form tutor.
- **Or, call** into school and report to reception, who will arrange for a member of staff (form tutor or Head of Year) to speak with parents.

What the school will do:

- **Telephone or text** parents on the first day of absence if we have not heard from a parent.
- **Invite parents** in to discuss attendance concerns with their child's Head of Year and/or Head of School if absences persist.
- **Establish** an attendance contract with parents and the student if attendance causes significant concern
- **Refer** the matter to the Education Welfare Team if attendance causes significant concern

9. Tracking and monitoring systems for attendance

We have robust in school systems to support and achieve good attendance for all our students.

School admin team

- **Record** absence information into SIMS from parent telephone calls/email.
- **Send** a parent text to any parents who have not informed the school of their child's absence by 9.30am on the first day of absence.
- **Log** information into SIMS following parental response to text message.
- **Inform** a child's Head of Year when contact, regarding absence, from a parent is poor or they identify concerns.
- **Email** a daily absence register to each Head of Year for their year group by 10am each day.
- **Collect** absent notes from the form tray each day and log in a child's file.

Heads of year

- **Review** attendance for their year group daily.
- **Have a register** of student's current attendance statistics and use the red, amber, green flagging system to identify concerns. This should include information based on the previous academic year. If a student is pupil premium/SEN/AGT this will be also be included on this register to identify the tracking of any patterns by group of learner.
- **Inform** form tutors to telephone the parents of any student who is absent for a second consecutive day, unless they are a flagged attendance concern. The purpose of this telephone call is to ensure that all is well and to offer any appropriate support. This call should be logged on SIMS.

- **Telephone** home on the first day of absence for any student who is flagged as an attendance concern. Telephone home daily if this absence continues. These calls will be logged on SIMS.
- **Organise** meetings with parents where attendance is becoming a concern or patterns are being identified.
- **Report** on their weekly attendance, tracking spreadsheet and actions for identified students in their weekly line management meetings with the AHT Pastoral & Well Being.
- **Alert** the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any safeguarding concerns regarding attendance, logging concerns using the schools safeguarding reporting systems
- **Prioritise** messages about attendance through assemblies and pastoral time.
- **Provide** training for staff and clarity of expectations through the leadership of their tutor teams.
- **Ensure** any absences are followed up by the form tutor/HOY with a telephone call
- **Celebrate** good and improving attendance.
- **Establish** attendance contracts.
- Work with the AHT Pastoral & Well Being if the Education Welfare Team becomes involved with a case.
- **Ensure** up to date student files and notes from meetings, telephone calls, action taken.

10. Barnet's Education Welfare Team

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage of any attendance issues and to work with staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Team at Barnet.

The Education Welfare Officer will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or Barnet Local Authority.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the Education Welfare Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is **020 8359 7684**.

11. Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A student who is late misses the start of the day and can miss work and vital information for the day. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons; this can be embarrassing for the student and can also encourage absence.

Lateness procedures

The school day starts at **8.30am** and we expect student to be in class at that time. Students who are late to the school gate or lessons will receive a late mark. A student who is late for school, without a valid reason, will receive a 30-minute detention on that day or the next day. Parents are encouraged to inform the school before 9.30 with a valid reason for their child's lateness.

30-minute detentions run on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays (we do not run detentions on Tuesdays or Thursdays so that students can attend enrichment). Any student who receives multiple punctuality detentions over the course of a week will be issued with an hour's detention on a Friday and placed on punctuality report by their tutor or Head of Year.

Students who are repeatedly late are placed on punctuality report. Students on punctuality report can also be given 30 minute 8am school detentions with their Head of Year to support improvements in punctuality. Students' punctuality is monitored carefully and where patterns of regular lateness to school are identified students will be issued with a detention. Parents will be requested to meet with their child's Head of Year where a detention for poor punctuality is issued.

At **9.30am** the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if a student arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be at school, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If a student has a persistent late record parents will be asked to meet with their child's Head of Year and/or Head of School to resolve the problem. Parents are encouraged to approach their child's form tutor or Head of Year if they are experiencing problems getting their child to school on time. Students may be placed on punctuality report to support them in improving their punctuality.

Parents whose children are marked as unauthorised late, U in the register, 6 times in any 4-week period could each be issued with a Fixed-Penalty Notice of £60 by the Local Authority.

Reporting a child who is unwell

Parents are encouraged to send their child into school wherever possible. However, if your child is unwell with sickness, diarrhoea or a known medical condition where your GP has advised they do not attend school, please call and inform the school of their absence by 9.30am. If a student without a known medical condition has more than 6 sessions of illness per term the school will ask the parent to provide medical evidence in the form of a letter from the GP to support the 7th absence and subsequent absences.

If your child or a member of your household has a temperature, persistent cough, loss of sense of taste and smell or other COVID19 symptoms please do not send your child into school. Please inform the school immediately and make arrangements for your child to have a COVID19 test and isolate as per government guidance. You can get support to do this by contacting your local GP by telephone, calling 111 or using this link:

<https://www.barnet.gov.uk/internal/covid-19-testing-news-and-updates>

Tracking and monitoring of punctuality

We have robust in school systems to support and achieve good attendance for all our students. Securing good punctuality is a key aspect of this.

Each morning one member of the middle or senior leadership team will be on duty from 8am to 8.45am. This duty will include completing the late book for any late students and

issuing punctuality detentions. At the end of their duty, at 8.45am, the late book should be handed to the designated member of the admin team.

A member of the school admin team is focused on attendance. As part of this role they will carry out the following actions related to punctuality. **They will:**

Log students issued with late detentions by the duty team into SIMS and this will inform parents of the detention.

Ensure minutes late have been added into SIMS for any students registered as late.

Heads of Year will:

- Lead punctuality detentions.
- Review punctuality for their year group daily.
- Have a register of student's current punctuality and use the red, amber, green flagging system to identify concerns. This should include information based on the previous academic year. If a student is pupil premium/SEN/AGT or has a medical condition that affects their attendance this will be also be included on the punctuality register to identify the tracking of any patterns by group of learner.
- Inform form tutors to telephone the parents of any student whose punctuality is becoming a concern. The purpose of this telephone call is to ensure parents are aware that their child is regularly late and to ensure that all is well and to offer any appropriate support. This call should be logged on SIMS.
- Add any student with 3 late detentions in a week/repeated patterns of poor attendance to the 1hour detention list and put them on a punctuality report and telephone home to inform parents of this.
- Organise meetings with parents where punctuality is becoming a concern or patterns are being identified.
- Report on their weekly punctuality, tracking spreadsheet and actions for identified students in their weekly line management meetings with the Head of School and SAHT Pastoral & Well Being.
- Alert the Head of School, DSL and SAHT Pastoral & Wellbeing of any safeguarding concerns regarding punctuality by logging concerns on CPOMS using the schools safeguarding procedures.
- Prioritise messages about punctuality through assemblies and pastoral time.
- Provide training for staff and clarity of expectations through the leadership of their tutor teams.
- Celebrate good and improving punctuality.
- Work with the Heads of School, SAHT Pastoral & Wellbeing if the Education Welfare Team becomes involved with a case.
- Ensure student files are kept up to date with medical notes, meeting notes, emails, telephone calls and action taken.

