



PACE Academy Trust

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

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PACE Academy Trust Attendance and Punctuality Policy

INTRODUCTION

PACE School Trust recognises that all pupils have the right to access full time education. A good education helps to give children the best possible start in life. Evidence suggests that children out of school are at risk of becoming victims of crime or abuse and more likely to be drawn into anti-social behaviour. Regular attendance is essential to enable students to take part in all the opportunities available and to develop their full potential. We are committed to working in partnership with our parents/carers who are responsible for ensuring their children access education. Students, staff and parents/carers, governors all have some part to play in securing these aims by implementing this policy.

AIMS

This policy provides the framework within which all staff, directors, governors, parents, pupils, carers and external agencies can contribute to the development and maintenance of high attendance and excellent punctuality.

- To ensure a cohesive system for maintaining full attendance and excellent punctuality is in place, which is clearly communicated to all school staff, pupils, directors, governors and parents.
- To have an effective and efficient administration system for monitoring and intervening with issues relating to attendance and punctuality.
- To offer pupils and parents/carers good support, advice and guidance on the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

OBJECTIVES

For pupils

- To attend school every day and on time
- To ensure they maximise their learning potential by taking responsibility for achieving excellent levels of attendance and punctuality
- To discuss with their teacher any problems that may prevent full time attendance or punctual arrival at school
- To support their fellow pupils and thereby their class in winning awards that relate to attendance and punctuality.

For Parents and Carers

- To be fully supportive of the school with regard to attendance and punctuality
- To ensure their child attends every day, on time and is prepared for the day

- To support the school and their child (ren) by not requesting authorised absence for holidays, during term time, and minimizing dental and medical appointments during the school day
- To follow the school procedures for dealing with attendance, by contacting the school on the first day of absence
- To contact the School immediately if they have concerns or if there are issues preventing full time attendance.

For Office Administrators

- Carry out first day calling/text messaging and establish reasons for absence including telephone calls to parents/carers on the first day of absence, send attendance letters.
- Ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the school computerised registration systems for attendance and punctuality, for example, processing registers.
- Prepare and distribute attendance data and reports to staff and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a regular basis
- To liaise with the SLT/Inclusion Leader and assist in following up poor attendance and punctuality, for example, organising attendance meetings with parents/carers, liaising with Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

For the School Leadership Team

- Ensure that the learning environment, on offer to students, creates the foundations for excellent attendance and punctuality
- To co-ordinate and monitor the policy and procedures for attendance and punctuality throughout the school.
- To raise the profile and importance of attendance and punctuality, for example, through the assemblies and the reward systems that are put in place.
- To be responsible for regular liaison with the Inclusion Leader and EWO, regarding poor attendance of pupils and issues related to poor punctuality
- To liaise with parents as appropriate in response to attendance and punctuality issues; attending parental meetings as appropriate
- To analyse and act swiftly in response to report data on attendance and punctuality.
- To ensure that school expectations, in regards to this policy on attendance and punctuality, are communicated clearly to all stakeholders.

For the Directors/Governors

- To annually agree attendance targets
- To take a lead role in supporting the school in the implementation of its approach to attendance and punctuality, especially in response to parents in supporting unauthorised absence.

ABSENCE

Under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child(ren) attends the School on a regular and full-time basis. Every absence and half-day absence has to be classified by the Academy, as either authorised or unauthorised. Unauthorised absence will lead to investigations by the School staff or our Education Welfare Officer, who can offer support and guidance. For extended periods of unauthorised absence, where no acceptable explanation from parents is given, a Penalty Notice may be issued or legal action taken against parents.

Under normal circumstances, the only reason a pupil should miss school is if they are too ill to attend. This is an example of an authorised absence. Medical evidence will be required, for any absences of a week or more and for anyone with three or more periods of absence over a 6 week period with no justifiable reason provided.

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. i.e. pupil birthday, having the day off to accompany a parent to a medical appointment, shopping for (uniform). This includes keeping students away from school unnecessarily and absences which the school considers to have not been properly explained.

EXCEPTIONAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 states that Head teacher may not authorise any leave of absence (i.e. holiday taken in term time). They are only allowed to consider a leave of absence if the circumstances are classed as exceptional, i.e. compassionate grounds and permission has been requested to the Head Teacher. **It is not the right of the parent to take children away during term time.**

The Administration officers work with the Deputy Head/Assistant Head/Inclusion Leader and Head Teacher, in overseeing any such requests from parents. If the School does not agree to the request then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If the leave of absence involves any travel arrangement, these must not be booked until permission is granted by the Head Teacher. The leave of absence application form is available from the office administrators who pass the request to the Head Teacher along with the attendance certificate and any other relevant information. The Head Teacher will consider the request taking into account:

- The student's previous attendance history
- The time of the year regards any public or internal examinations
- Attendance and punctuality in the current and previous academic year
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made

A letter of approval (or a letter stating the request is not approved) will then be sent to the parent/guardian clearly stipulating that approval is only given in these **exceptional circumstances** and that **no** further requests will be considered. Parents/Guardians are also informed that if any leave is taken beyond the dates agreed, a Fixed Penalty Notice** could be issued to each parent and if applicable for each child.

***** Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine imposed where a parent fails to ensure that their child is in education or has an unacceptable period of unauthorised absences. The Penalty Notice is £60 that must be paid within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.***

PROCEDURES FOR REGISTRATION

School attendance registers are legal documents. They are required by law to be called twice a day at the commencement of each AM and PM session.

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Teachers should notify the school office if an explanation is received for the absence from the parent/carer. The Administration Officer has the responsibility to seek an explanation for a child's absence and the teacher/attendance officer to ensure that a note is received explaining reason for absence on the first day back to school.

Registration timings for individual schools can be found in Appendix I.

REPORTING ABSENCE

Parents are expected to contact the School on the first day of absence before 10.00am. If we have not received a message of the child's absence, the school office will either telephone or text the parent/carer to establish the reason for the child not being in school and the length of time the pupil will be absent. After the third day of absence a phone call must be made, or a message forwarded from the parent/carer to provide an update and the expected date of return.

A 1st, 3rd and 5th day contact will be attempted by the school office if no information regarding the absence has been received. After 5 days with no contact the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and referred to the EWO who may carry out a home visit.

MEDICAL/HOSPITAL APPOINTMENTS

Parents and carers must try and ensure where possible that any medical appointments are made after school or during the school holiday period. Should a child have a medical appointment during an am or pm session, the expectation is they will be returned to school following the appointment and not be taken out of school for the whole day. They will be marked as unauthorised for the session if they do not return to school and no explanation is given.

Once a term, an official register will be sent to parents/carers. The official register will highlight the number of authorised and unauthorised absences as well as the number of late marks for each child.

The school has a legal duty to publish the above information on the child's school report.

REWARDS & INCENTIVES

The School operates a programme of rewards including class awards, trophies and individual certificates.

Teachers/Senior Leaders must take overall responsibility for encouraging and rewarding publicly the need for high attendance and excellent levels of punctuality. This will commonly be achieved through assemblies and encouraging a competitive spirit with other groups. Informal praise and formal awards should both be used and supported by all School Staff.

DEALING WITH ABSENCE

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored through the following processes:

- Daily lists of absences
- Follow up procedures on the first day of absence
- Weekly Statistics
- Rewards and sanctions statistics for attendance and punctuality

Where pupils are likely to have a period of long absence, for example from a period of illness or self isolation, then teachers should liaise with parents and make arrangements for work to be sent home.

Where there is a significant pattern of absence, Attendance Officer will:

- Start intervention at 95% with a letter being sent home to parents/carers informing of the cause for concern
- If attendance continues to be a concern a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Officer who will offer support and guidance, but may also refer to the LA to issue a Penalty Notice or consideration of legal proceedings

DELETIONS FROM THE REGISTER/REMOVAL FROM THE SCHOOL ROLE

Parents must ensure they inform the School of any change of address, contact details or family circumstances. Should a parent advise they are moving and will be removing their child (ren) from the school role, the school must attempt to obtain the parent's new address and if possible the name of the new school the child will be attending. If this information is not supplied the School will complete a Missing from Education form and forward it to the LA.

In accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, children will only be deleted from the register when one of the following circumstances applies:

- Permanent exclusion has occurred and procedures have been completed
- Transfer between schools is confirmed by communication with the new school
- Children withdrawn to be educated outside the school system (Educated otherwise)
- Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the child
- 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the child
- Left the school but not known where he or she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the child

The School will report a child is Missing from Education to the LA, following 10 consecutive days of absence, when all checks have been exhausted. This will include: telephone calls to all known numbers on the school system, including relatives, discussion with class teacher and known friends of pupil, home visit by School/ EWO. The school will email: childrenmissingfromeducation@croydon.gov.uk with the relevant information and await confirmation to remove.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The School will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through the Head teacher/Deputy who will oversee the generation of attendance data and report to the SLT where there are any key issues.