



Arts & Media School  
ISLINGTON

# Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date: 01.09.2022

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Author: D.Mcloughlin

# **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

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## **Introduction**

Arts and Media School Islington is committed to providing a full and effective education for all our students. We recognize that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

For our students to gain maximum benefit from the educational opportunities provided throughout their time at Arts and Media School Islington it is vital that they attend school regularly and be at school and lessons, on time, everyday school is open.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. National data has shown that students whose attendance remains above 97% are the most likely to achieve well in their schooling, therefore it is our aim to ensure the minimum attendance target for all students over the course of the academic year is met

## **Principles**

- A positive attendance and punctuality culture is more likely to be achieved when all partners cooperate with each other
- Students must attend school regularly and arrive on time to school and lessons
- Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without good reason creates an offence in law (Education act 1996 Section 444)
- Arts and Media School Islington will provide a quality education appropriate to all our student's needs via a published timetable which necessitates regular and punctual attendance
- Arts and Media School Islington will aim to support parents in ensuring that their children attend school regularly and on time and will hold parents to account when their child's attendance and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

## **Aims**

- The school will ensure that the welfare of children is given paramount consideration when developing and delivering all school activity
- Ensure every pupils has access to full time education to which they are entitled
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

## **Promoting Regular Attendance**

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everyone's responsibility – parents, pupils and all members of Arts and Media School Islington staff. To help us all to focus on this the school will:

- Give parents / carers details on attendance in our newsletters and website.
- Report to parents / carers annually their child's attendance figures with their annual school report.
- Contact parents / carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance .
- Celebrate good attendance and punctuality by displaying individual and class achievement
- Reward good or improving attendance.

**In turn the school expects that:**

**All students will:**

- Maintain an attendance record above 97%
- Tell their form tutor, head of year or student welfare about any problem which is making it hard for them to attend school regularly and on time.

**All Parents / Carers will:**

- Encourage their children to attend school every day and on time
- Ensure that they contact school as soon as possible whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- Ensure that their children arrive in school fully prepared for the school day and provide the school with up to date home, work and emergency contact numbers and not arrange family holidays during the school term.
- Inform the school, in confidence, about any problem which might affect their child's attendance or behaviour.

***The Education Act 1996 states that all learners should attend school regularly and punctually: This means that learners must attend school by law and parents and carers are legally responsible for making sure this happens. Parents who are found guilty of breaking the law on attendance may be taken to court and face fines of up to £2500, and in some cases imprisonment. Schools and Local Councils can also use court proceedings to seek an Education Supervision Order or Attendance Order on the child. During these court proceedings the magistrates may consider issuing a parenting order which would include parents attending parenting skills sessions.***

**Welfare Team, Teachers and Pastoral Team will:**

- Accurately complete attendance registers
- Record late arrival and ensure that the school's sanctions policy is followed i.e. detentions (where appropriate).
- Make every reasonable effort to contact the parent when their child fails to attend school without good reason or their attendance falls below 97%
- Deal discretely and properly with any problem notified to the school by the parent.
- Make every effort to encourage good attendance, punctuality and behaviour.

**The Attendance Manager will:**

- Collate attendance and punctuality data for each year group
- Oversee the registration process and ensure that registers are completed accurately and on time.
- Ensure that all reasons for absence are recorded in the register
- Follow-up any unexplained non-attendance by contacting the parent/carer –first day call wherever possible.
- Initiate and oversee all interventions that aim to improve the attendance of any students that are persistently absent from school.

## **Understanding Types of Absence**

Every time a student is absent from school, even for part of one day, the absence has to be classified by the school (not by the parents/carers) as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

### **Authorised Absence**

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent/carer. For example, if a child is unwell, the parent/carer telephones the school to explain the absence.

Only the school can authorise an absence. Parents/carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents/carers will be authorised, for example, if a parent takes a child shopping for new school shoes during school hours, this will not be authorised.

### **Unauthorised Absence**

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is absent from school without a valid reason, even with the support of the parent/carer. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been explained properly.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a present mark.
- Shopping, birthdays or looking after other children.
- Day trips and/or holidays during term time which have not been agreed by the school.

Each school reserves the right to refer specific unauthorised absences to their Access and Engagement Service, who may deem it appropriate to issue a fixed penalty notice.

### **Persistent and Severe Absence**

A Student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 19 days (10%) or more of their education across the school year for whatever reason. A student will become a 'severe absentee' if they miss 50% (95 days) of their education across the school year for whatever reason. Absence of this level will have a detrimental effect to any child's education and we ask for parents/carers support and co-operation to tackle this. We will

monitor all absences and the reasons given thoroughly. Any Student that is at risk of reaching the Persistent Absence level will be at risk of being referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Persistent Absence Students are tracked and monitored carefully and we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment.

## **Punctuality and Lateness**

- Registration 8.45am and 2.05pm
- Form Tutors and Teachers will have 10 minutes after this time to complete the registers.
- Students must be in the rooms by 8.45 am and their teaching rooms by 2.05pm.
- The morning register will close at 9.10am.
- Students who arrive late in the morning will be recorded as such at the gate. Students that arrive late in the afternoon should be recorded with a L on the register.
- Students arriving after 8.45am (KS3) should sign in at the main reception where they will be recorded as late.
- Students who arrive at school after 9.10am will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless their parent has given a satisfactory reason to why the student has arrived late to school.
- We operate an 'On The Way, Underway' system, with bells to end and begin lessons - there is 5 minutes transition time. If students are not in the room by the second bell, they will be counted as traunts and given a D3 detention.

## **Absence Procedures**

- If a child is absent from school, the parent/carer must follow the following procedures: The parent/carer must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 8:40am (Tel: 0207 281 5511 ext 1027/1025). The school has an answer phone available to leave a message if no one is available to take calls.
- Or they can call into school and report to reception.

### **If a child is absent the school will:**

- Telephone or text the child's parent / carer on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them.
- If the school does not have a reason for a student's absence by 11am, the Attendance Manager may choose to conduct a home visit
- A letter will be sent informing the parent / carer of the child's absence and that a reason for the child's absence still need to be provided.
- In the event that we are unable to establish a reason as to why a child has been absent from school, the parent/carer will be invited to discuss the situation with our Attendance Manager and/or Head of Year.

### **If absence persists the school will:**

- Refer the matter to the Islington Access and Engagement Service.



## Late Procedures

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 8.40am (KS3) and we expect our children to be on school premises before this time ready for registration. Students must be in their form rooms for 8.45. Students arriving after 8.40 am will have their name taken at the gate, and will be recorded as late.
- Students arriving after 8.40 should sign in at the main reception where they will be recorded as late. Students that fail to sign in correctly when they arrive will be sanctioned with an after school detention.
- Students who arrive late to school without a note with a valid reason as to why they were late will attend a 30 minute after school detention, where they must fill in a Punctuality Reflection Form. On this form, students are expected to reflect on the importance of being on time and to explain why they were late to school that morning.
- Failure to attend or fill in the Punctuality reflection form correctly will result in a 75 minute D3L detention after school the next day being issued.
- The information that the students provide on the form is reviewed by form tutors and year leaders each week and form the basis of any conversations with students about strategies that can help them improve their attendance.
- If students are late to school twice or more in the same week, they shall receive 75 minute D3L detention.

The morning register will close at 9.10am. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence for any unexplained absences. **This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.**

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a relevant Form Tutor or Head of Year to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you

are having problems getting your child to school on time. **Students arriving after this time will receive a D3 (75 minute) same day detention.**

## **The Attendance Manager/ Access and Engagement Service**

The Attendance Manager at Arts and Media School Islington is:

Ms Tracey Warner

t.warner@amsi.school

Tel:0207 281 5511 EXT 1025

The Local Authority Access and Engagement Service is:

[pupilservices@islington.gov.uk](mailto:pupilservices@islington.gov.uk)

020 7527 3747

222 Upper Street, N1 1XR

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved, the school may refer a child to the Education Welfare Service. The Attendance Manager will also work to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, sanctions such as Fixed Penalty Notices and prosecutions in the Magistrates Court will be pursued if the child is of compulsory school age. In very serious cases parents/carers have faced prison sentences. If a child's attendance falls below 80%, this will be flagged to the safeguarding team as a concern that will need to be investigated further.

Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Local Authority.

## **Leave of Absence**

Parents do not have the automatic right or entitlement to take their child out of the school for a holiday. It is the decision of the school whether to authorise an absence or not.

At Arts and Media School Islington, holidays are not allowed during term-time, as this is disruptive to both the student and to the group, especially where coursework and

controlled assessments are concerned. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 states that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Leave of absence must be sought from the Headteacher and will only be authorised in very exceptional circumstances. Letters regarding leave must be addressed to 'The Headteacher' well in advance of the requested absence.

Arts and Media School Islington reserves the right to refer specific unauthorised absences, including leave of absence that have been extended beyond the agreed period, to the Access and Engagement Service, who may deem it appropriate to issue a fixed penalty notice.

## **Extreme Weather**

Arts and Media School Islington is committed to ensuring that all our students are able to maximise their potential. We therefore aim to remain open during inclement weather, balancing the risks from lower supervision, disrupted journeys, or accidents, against disruption to our students' learning.

In the rare circumstances that it becomes necessary to close one or more of our schools due to severe weather, the decision will not be taken lightly. The decision to close the school will be based on the fact that students or staff would face the risk of accidents.

**When exceptional weather is expected the following guidelines should be noted:**

### **Communication**

If the school is to be closed due to severe weather before students arrive at the beginning of the school day, a note will be posted on the school website as soon as possible, usually by 7.00am. A text message will also be sent to parents/carers.

If weather conditions deteriorate whilst the school is in session we will endeavour to contact parents to inform them of the situation. Students will be kept fully informed of the decision and guidance given as to the next steps. The website will be kept updated during this time.

### **Clothing**

Students should wear appropriate clothing, taking into account the type of weather, including a hat, gloves and suitable coat, as necessary. Suitable footwear to cope with the weather may be necessary, but school shoes should be worn upon entry to the school building.

### **Transportation**

Parents are advised to check transportation information if their child travels by public transport. If the school is open and a student cannot get in due to the weather, parents should contact the school to report this absence.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The Heads of Year/Pastoral Teams will:

- Log any instances of absence and lateness, liaise with the form tutors and meet weekly with the attendance team. Meetings will alternately focus on students that are below 90%, and the students that are in the range of 90%-97% (Pastoral Intervention Group).
- Analyse the registers ensuring the correct codes are entered.
- Meet weekly with the Attendance Manager and Head of Welfare to discuss any problems or issues.
- School attendance will be regularly reported in the agreed format to the Governing Board.

The Governors will:

- Ensure that the school has in place a whole school attendance and punctuality policy
- Monitor the effectiveness of the whole school policy

