



Park Academy West London

an Aspirations Academy

Name of Policy:

Attendance

Effective From:

September 2017

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Park Academy West London

PRINCIPLES

Every child has the right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Attendance is mandatory at all sessions, unless otherwise agreed and also enables the Academy to exercise a duty of care. Students cannot learn and make progress if they are not at the Academy and non-attendance at the Academy is one of the biggest causes of underachievement in young people.

Parents /carers, students and staff share responsibility for ensuring that attendance is excellent at the Academy and that unauthorised absence is minimised. It is also recognised that attendance is a legal requisite and that parents/carers hold the ultimate responsibility. To this end the Academy will pursue every avenue, including a legal route, if parents/carers do not actively ensure that their child attends school every day.

OBJECTIVES

Park Academy will:

- Encourage and assist all students to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality and minimise absence.
- Work with parents/carers when attendance gives cause for concern.
- Keep accurate records and use this data to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Take every opportunity to deliver excellent attendance messages to students and parents.
- Liaise with outside agencies where necessary to help improve individual students' attendance.
- Seek to maximise alternative opportunities for those students who are disaffected and disengaged, to engage effectively with educational provision both in the Academy and through external providers, where possible.

GUIDELINES

1. Park Academy West London will:

- Celebrate good attendance and punctuality.
- Investigate all unexplained and unauthorised absence.
- Work with parents when attendance gives cause for concern.
- Keep accurate records and use this data to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Take every opportunity to deliver excellent attendance messages to students and parents.
- Liaise with outside agencies where necessary to help improve individual student's attendance.

2. Academic Mentors and other staff will:

- Set a good example in matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Investigate promptly any absenteeism and lateness.
- Carry out registration through SIMs.
- Alert the Attendance Officer when there are problems with individual students' attendance.

3. The Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor attendance on a regular basis, setting targets for improvement as appropriate.
- Monitor the performance of individual Academic Mentor Groups and investigate where patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed.
- Meet with the Participation Officer regularly in order to discuss students who have not responded to the Academy's strategies and, where necessary, make referrals to the Early Intervention and Prevention Service.
- Follow up internal/external truancy through communication with Coordinators.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and rewards.
- Ensure data is provided on a weekly basis to all staff, including Middle and Senior Management.
- Support Academic Mentors in raising attendance standards.
- Liaise closely with the Inclusion team at Park Academy, to ensure action is taken to support 'at risk' students.

4. Parents/Carers

- Parents are responsible for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. This is a legal requirement.
- Parents are asked to immediately inform Park Academy of the reason for absence, on the first morning of absence, by telephoning the Attendance Officer, and telephone every day of absence thereafter.
- Parents are encouraged to talk with Academic Mentors and Co-ordinators should there be issues at home that may affect their child's attendance.

5. Students must:

- Ensure that they attend Park Academy regularly and punctually.
- Attend all lessons on time.
- Not leave the Academy premises without prior permission.
- Students should talk to their Academic Mentor or Co-ordinator should they have any problems that may affect their attendance or

learning opportunities.

6. Procedures at Park Academy

6.1 Registration will be carried out in Academic Mentoring at 8:40am each morning, and in Period 5 in the afternoon. Registers will be closed at 8:40am and 2:10pm. Should a student arrive after these times, he/she will be marked late for that session.

6.2 Lateness. Students who arrive between 8:40am and 9:05am must report to Reception to sign in, and will receive a 1 hour Academy Detention. Lateness after 9:05 will result in a 1.5 hour Coordinator Detention on the same day. Persistent lateness will result in further sanctions, including parental meetings to support with punctuality. Please refer to the Punctuality Policy for further information regarding this.

6.3 Academic Mentors or the Attendance Officer will inform parents whenever there appears to be a problem regarding punctuality.

6.4 If a student arrives late for a lesson, then the teacher should record this via SIMS registration. If the student is late, then he/she should be kept in by the subject teacher to make up the time.

7. Authorised and unauthorised absence

7.1 Should a student be ill and unable to attend Academy, the parents/carers are asked to contact the Attendance Officer on the first day of absence. The Academy may require a doctor's note should attendance be an ongoing problem.

7.2 Absence from Park Academy may be authorised for certain specific reasons, including:

- Illness
- Unavoidable medical/dental appointments
- Days of religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances e.g. family bereavement

Absence from Park Academy will not be authorised for:

- Shopping
- Looking after an unwell family member
- Visiting or meeting relations and/or friends
- Birthdays

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list. The Academy follows DfE guidelines with regards to all absence coding.

8. Term Time Holidays

8.1 Absence during term time as a result of holidays interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of students. The Academy's policy does not authorise holidays during term time. Parents/carers should therefore avoid booking holidays during term time.

8.2 If a parent/carer does proceed with a term time holiday, the student must then see all his/her teachers to ensure that parents are aware of the work which will be missed and any other implications of taking the holiday.

8.3 The Participation Team & Early Intervention and Prevention Services may issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised absence. Penalty Notices can be issued to each Parent/Carer concerned and for each child. If unauthorised leave is repeated the Participation Team & Early Intervention and Prevention Services may issue summons to each parent to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.

8.4 Park Academy does not consider visits to family, Medical Treatment abroad or religious trips exceptional circumstances.

9. Communication

9.1 The Academy's attendance policy will be communicated through:

- The Academy's prospectus and website
- Home/Academy agreements
- Regular newsletter items
- Guidance and advice in the Staff Handbook

10. If your child is absent parents/carers:

- Must contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence and report this to the Attendance Officer;
- Must send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence. Please do this even if you have already telephoned us;
- Can call into Reception, who will arrange for an appropriate member of staff to speak with you.

11. If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. Park Academy uses a text messaging service which you are able to reply to, if necessary.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Academic Mentor, Attendance Officer, and/or Co-ordinator;
- Take further action as appropriate, including legal action.

12. Telephone numbers

12.1 There are times when we need to contact parents, over absence or in an

emergency, so we need to have contact numbers at all times. Please help us by making sure we always have an up to date number. If we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

13. Understanding types of absence

13.1 Every half-day absence from Park has to be classified by the Academy (not by the parents / carers), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

13.2 Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from the Academy for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments, which unavoidably fall in during the day or emergencies.

13.3 Unauthorised absences are those which the Academy does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Academy using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off Academy unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at the Academy too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time.

13.4 Whilst some children may be away because they are ill, sometimes it is because they can be reluctant to attend. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the Academy, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

14. Holidays

14.1 The Academy has a zero tolerance towards holidays and expect students to be at Park Academy every day.

15. Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

15.1 A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more of Academy time across the Academy year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any student's educational prospects and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

15.2 We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

15.3 PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with Academic Mentoring where absence affects attainment.

15.4 All our PA students and their parents are subject to an Action Plan, put together by key members of staff such as the Attendance Officer, Academic Mentors or Co-ordinators. The plan may include: allocation of additional support through a Mentor, individual incentive programmes and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

15.5 All PA cases are also automatically made known to the Participation Officer who may convene an Attendance Panel. If no improvement is seen, after a set period of time after the Attendance Panel then the Participation Officer may issue a penalty notice, to each parent/carer. (Currently £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days). If the penalty notice is unpaid the matter is automatically referred to the Magistrates Court.

16. Lateness

16.1 Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and disrupt learning. Late arriving students also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How we manage lateness:

The day starts at **8:30am** and we expect your child to be in class before 8:40am.

Registers are marked by **8:40am** during Academic Mentoring and your child will receive a late mark and Academy Detention if they are not in by that time.

At **9:05am** the registers will be closed. If your child has not been registered by a class teacher by this time an automatic absence call and / or text message will be sent out advising you that your child has not registered and is deemed to be absent without reason. If a child arrives after 9:05am, they will be issued with a Co-ordinator Detention (1.5 hours on the same day).

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of their School, Attendance or Leadership Team to resolve the problem. However, we encourage you to approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child in on time.

Further information can be found in our Punctuality Policy.

17. Rewards

17.1 The Academy will reward all students with outstanding attendance and punctuality, on a termly basis.

17.2 Rewards include:

- Certificates
- Treats from the canteen
- Queue jump passes
- End of term raffles

18. Academy targets, projects and special initiatives

18.1 Park Academy has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

18.2 The minimum level of attendance for this Academy is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

18.3 Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful Academy time and we believe our students can be amongst the best in the country.

18.4 Through the year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

18.5 Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided on the web site. We ask for your full support to achieve outstanding targets.

19. Attendance Staff

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this Academy are:

Academic Mentors
Co-ordinators
Deputy Co-ordinators
Nora Bunce, Attendance Officer
Paul Daniel, Vice Principal
All Assistant Principals for their School

Those people responsible for attendance matters at the Local Authority are:

Pauline Hutchinson (Participation Officer)

20. Educational Trips

20.1 It is expected that students have a minimum of 96% to be offered a place on non-statutory educational trips. Students with attendance below 96% may only be offered a place at the discretion of the Academy.

20.2 The exception to this is if there is medical evidence explaining specific or long term absence.

21. Conclusion

21.1 It is hoped that by following this policy, Park Academy can encourage and maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality, and reduce levels of unauthorised absence. The close relationship between attendance and achievement makes this an important whole Academy policy.