



Park Academy West London
an Aspirations Academy

Attendance Policy

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INTRODUCTION

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.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Park Academy West London will:

1. Encourage and assist all students to achieve excellent levels of attendance and punctuality and minimise absence.
2. Work with parents/carers when attendance gives cause for concern.
3. Keep accurate records and use this data to maintain high levels of attendance and punctuality.
4. Take every opportunity to deliver excellent attendance messages to students and parents.
5. Liaise with outside agencies where necessary to help improve individual students' attendance.
6. 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.

1. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.1 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.

1.2 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.

1.3 The Attendance Officer will:

- Monitor attendance on a regular basis, setting targets for improvement as appropriate.
- Monitor the performance of individual academic mentoring groups and investigate where patterns of absenteeism are not being effectively addressed.
- Meet with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) regularly in order to discuss students who have not responded to the Academy's strategies and, where necessary, make referrals to the Education Welfare Service.
- Follow up internal/external truancy through communication with Year Team Leads.
- Promote good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and rewards.
- Ensure data is provided on a weekly basis to all staff, including Middle and Senior Leaders.
- Support Academic Mentors in raising attendance standards.
- Liaise with the Inclusion Team to organise home visits where appropriate.

1.4 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 Coordinators should there be issues at home that may affect their child's attendance.

1.5 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 Coordinator should they have any problems that may affect their attendance or learning opportunities.

2 TYPES OF ABSENCE

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.

2.1 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

The Academy may require a doctor's note should attendance be an ongoing problem.

2.2 Absence from Park Academy will not be authorised for:

- Shopping
- Looking after an unwell family member
- Visiting or meeting relations and/or friends
- Birthdays
- Holidays (See section 7)

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

2.3 Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

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.

3. REPORTING ABSENCES

If your child is absent parents/carers must:

- Contact Reception as soon as possible on the first day of absence and report this to the Attendance Officer.

4. REGISTERS

The Academy is required by law to record attendance registers twice daily - once at the start of the morning session and at some stage during the afternoon session. Registers – whether kept in paper form or electronically - are legal documents. Should the parents of a persistent non-attendee be prosecuted by the Local Authority under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, then the information which the register contains will be the main source of evidence presented to the court.

Registration will be carried out during academic mentoring at 8:30am each morning and at 3.10pm in the afternoon on Monday to Thursday, whilst Friday afternoon registration is taken at 1:35pm. Should a student arrive after these times, he/she will be marked late for that session.

5. LATENESS

Students who arrive after 8:30am must sign in with the Attendance Officer at Reception. Students that are late to the Academy, after 8.30am but before 8.50am will receive a 15 minute detention during Break 1. Students that arrive after 8.50am receive a 40 minute detention on the same day, and parents/carers are informed of this. Persistent lateness will result in further sanctions, including parental meetings to support punctuality.

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

6. PROMOTING GOOD SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Park Academy West London has a positive ethos in maintaining and promoting good attendance. Positive acknowledgement and praise for students who improve their attendance as well as for those that maintain excellent attendance exists and is regularly reviewed.

The Academy will reward all students with outstanding attendance and punctuality, on a termly basis, to demonstrate how highly attendance is valued:

- Achievement Points
- Certificates
- End of term raffles

7. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Any request for a leave of absence should be given in writing to the Principal. It should state clearly the name of the student, the reason for request and how long the leave is for. It should also be provided in plenty of time for a response to be formulated, where possible. All requests for leave of absence are responded to in writing.

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. CONTINUED ABSENCE

If a student is absent from the Academy for ten days or more without contact from home, a home visit will be arranged. The Academy will call before the home visit is scheduled to take place. A member of Park Academy staff, the Local Authority's Participation Team or the Police can complete home visits on behalf of the Academy. Please see the Home Visit Guidance document for more information.

The parent/carer of a child of compulsory school age is required by law to ensure that the child regularly attends the school at which he/she is registered. Should a parent fail to ensure that his/her child attends that school regularly then the parent is guilty of an offence. Parents who are convicted of this offence may be fined up to £2,500 and/or sentenced to up to three months in prison. Alternatively parents may be subject to a fixed penalty notice. When a child of compulsory school age is absent from school, the attendance register must indicate whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Should the absence be authorised by the school the parent cannot be convicted.

Covid-19 Addendum

All Covid-19 absences must be directly reported to the Academy via the usual method. The Academy's protocols will follow Government guidance.

If students have to self-isolate, it will impact on their overall attendance figures.

If a student tests positive for Covid-19 it is important that they contact the Academy as soon as possible.