

Attendance Policy

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1. Aim of the Trust

‘One community. Many ideas. Everyone’s future.’

We aim to provide an exceptional education for every child in the Trust through an ethos of collaboration and high aspirations and through the principles of quality learning using curiosity, exploration and discovery.

2. Rational

The aim of The Arbib Education Trust Attendance Policy is to provide an environment which encourages all our students/pupils to attend school regularly and punctually. This is vital if we are to ensure they succeed in their schooling and in their future lives.

The whole Trust community has a responsibility for promoting excellent attendance, supporting parents/carers, students/pupils and all Trust staff.

This policy is linked to:
TLA Behaviour for Learning
Positive Discipline Policy
Child Protection Policy

3. Purpose

Children who do not attend school regularly are much more likely to leave school with fewer or no qualifications; and they are more likely to be drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour. Parents/carers are responsible, by law, for ensuring that their children receive suitable full-time education. (National Audit Office June 2005). For children that are under compulsory school age, it is vital to set up high expectations that will continue across their school life. Therefore, this policy aims to ensure that:

- The specific responsibilities of Trust staff, the students/pupils and their parents/carers are

clearly defined and able to be evaluated

- A system of actions to be taken to address attendance concerns is in place
- Systems to support good attendance within The Arbib Education Trust Schools are consistent with good practice

4. Legislation and Guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the 'school attendance guidelines' from the Department for Education (DfE) – July 2019, and refers to the statutory guidance on 'School attendance parental responsibility measures' – January 2015 (Updated April 2020)

5. Academy Procedures

Parents'/carers' responsibilities

The Education Act 1996 states that all children should attend school regularly and punctually. Parents of children at either of the Primary Academies in the Trust have a responsibility to ensure their child/ children arrives between 08.30 and 8.50 each day. For the secondary academy, children must arrive between 7.45 and 8.20. Section 444 of the Education Act says:-

"If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered student at school fails to attend regularly at school, his parent is guilty of an offence".

(NB Where the Education Act refers to "he", it also means "she".)

If a student/child is prevented from attending school because of sickness or other unavoidable cause, it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to notify the school of the child's absence. Ideally this should be by telephone on the first day of absence, but if this is not possible it should be confirmed in writing. Wherever possible, parents /carers should avoid making medical/dental appointments for their children during school hours.

By law, all schools are required to keep an attendance register, and all children/students must be placed on this register. The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session. It will mark whether every child/student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

6. Authorised and unauthorised absence

It should be noted that **only** the school can authorise absence, not the parent/carer. School staff need not accept a parental explanation for a child's absence. Where no satisfactory explanation is given, the absence will be treated as **unauthorised**.

Parents/carers do not have the right to take their children out of school for a holiday during term time. If, however, parents/carers apply to the school in advance, the school may, at the Headteacher's discretion, grant up to two weeks' term-time absence in any academic year. The

Arbib Education Trust will only authorise such absences in exceptional circumstances and parents need to complete a request form, with the possibility of meeting with the Headteacher or another appropriate member of staff.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The Trustees

The Trustees are responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the Trust and each school within the Trust on at least a termly basis during set Governor Body Meetings. The Trust Board also holds the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher / Link Senior Leader

The Headteacher / Link Senior Leader is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to the Governing Body and Trustees. The Headteacher / Link Senior Leader also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual children/students and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

The Attendance Officer

The Attendance Lead/Officer in each school will carry out the day to day monitoring of the Arbib Education Trust Attendance Policy. A member of the Senior Leadership Team has responsibility for ensuring that the Attendance Policy is enforced in each school. The attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual child/student level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Headteacher / Link Senior Leader
- Works with Slough Children Services to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the Headteacher / Link Director when to issue fixed-penalty notices

School's staff responsibilities

All the staff at each school will provide an ethos that places a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality. The Arbib Education Trust staff are responsible for ensuring that students/children have good attendance by:

- ensuring that the electronic attendance registers are kept accurately;
- differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence (a letter or message from a parent /carer does not in itself authorise an absence - only the school can decide whether the parent/carer's explanation justifies authorising the absence);
- contacting the parent/carers by text, email or telephone on the first day of the absence (this is done by the Attendance Officer or appropriate member of staff);
- responding to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care;
- contacting parent/carers when there are concerns about a student's/child's absence, and recording the contact;
- consulting with the Slough Attendance Team if a student's/child's attendance continues to

give cause for concern;

- promoting regular school attendance;
- acknowledging good or improved attendance of individual students/child's, classes or house tutor groups;
- keeping subject registers in the secondary academy and following up any absences from lessons in order to deal with truancy which might occur during morning or afternoon sessions, as well as tracking lateness

7. Attendance Monitoring and Promoting Attendance

Students' responsibilities (Secondary)

All students should be aware of the importance of regular school attendance. If they are having difficulties that might prevent them from attending school regularly, they should speak to their House Tutor or designated Raising Standards Leader.

Students should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from school they should give their House Tutor a note from their parents/carers to explain the absence. Students also have the responsibility for following academy procedures if they arrive late.

Action on Attendance Concerns (Secondary)

- If a child is absent and no contact has been made through parents or first day phone calls, then a home visit may be made to assess possible risk.
- If concerns are raised following a home visit, the safeguarding policy will be followed and a possible referral to social care may be made.
- The academy will consider any student whose attendance is below 93.5% as having **Attendance Concerns**. House Tutors will address issues with student's whose attendance is below this figure with parent/carers and students.
- House Tutors will liaise with Heads of House/Raising Standard Leaders (RSL's) to address any issues that arise.
- The Attendance Officer will produce a weekly summary of student attendance for Heads of House/RSL's and House Tutors and identify individual students causing concern.
- Heads of House and RSL's will monitor the attendance of students in their respective attached year groups using data from the Attendance Officer. Every 3 weeks they will discuss attendance grids and outline actions agreed to address any concerns with their Academy Director line manager. Heads of House/RSLs will reward on a termly basis those students who have an excellent record of attendance.
- Students whose attendance falls below 90% will be considered to have **Serious Attendance Concerns**.
- The Academy Attendance Officer will identify such students and the Head of House will produce an Individual Action Plan Attendance Improvement Plan (AIP). The Attendance Officer will inform parents/carers in writing of the Academy's concerns.

- Persistent non-attenders will be placed on a **Fast-Track Attendance Improvement Monitoring Programme** managed by the Attendance Officer and an Academy Director
- Parent/carers of students whose attendance does not improve following the Fast Track Attendance Improvement Programme will be invited to attend a Governors' attendance panel meeting. Parent/carers of students whose attendance does not improve following all these interventions will face possible prosecution.
- The legislation set out in the Education Act 1996 enables the Academy to remove students after a period of 20 days **after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family** and in compliance with OFSTED guidelines. The Arbib Education Trust reserves the right to remove a student from roll in line with reasons listed in Annex A of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Action on Attendance Concerns (Primary)

- If a child is absent and no contact has been made through parents or first day phone calls, then a home visit may be made to assess possible risk.
- If concerns are raised following a home visit, the safeguarding policy will be followed and a possible referral to social care may be made.
- The school will consider any pupil whose attendance is below 93.5% as having **Attendance Concerns**. Our attendance team/class teachers will address issues with the parents/carers of pupils whose attendance is below this figure.
- Class teachers will liaise with Senior Leadership Team(SLT)/Year Leads/Attendance Officer to address any issues that arise.
- The Attendance Officer/Lead will produce a weekly summary of pupil attendance for SLT/Year Leads and identify individual students causing concern.
- SLT/Year Leads will monitor the attendance of pupils in their respective Key Stage using data from the Attendance Officer. Every 2 weeks they will discuss attendance and outline actions agreed to address any concerns with the senior leader responsible for attendance.
- Headteachers will reward on a termly basis those children who have an excellent record of attendance.
- Children whose attendance falls below 85% will be considered to have **Serious Attendance Concerns**.
- The Academy Attendance Officer/Lead will identify such children and with the senior leader responsible for attendance will produce an Individual Attendance Improvement plan. Parents will attend an attendance meeting and sign an attendance agreement.
- Persistent non-attenders will be placed on a **Fast-Track Attendance Improvement Monitoring Programme** managed by the Attendance Officer/Lead/SLT and family support worker.
- Parent/carers of children whose attendance does not improve following the Fast Track Attendance Improvement Programme will be invited to attend a Governors' attendance panel

meeting. Parent/carers of pupils whose attendance does not improve following all these interventions will be prosecuted.

- The legislation set out in the Education Act 1996 enables the school to remove children/students after a period of 20 days **after reasonable attempts have been made to contact the family** and in compliance with OFSTED guidelines. The Arbib Education Trust reserves the right to remove a student/child from roll in line with reasons listed in Annex A of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

8. Child Missing in Education

In line with Statutory Guidance, schools within The Arbib Education Trust will adopt Local Authority Protocols for Children Missing in Education.

Primarily, it is the responsibility of The Attendance Officer/Lead to alert a member of Senior Staff, preferably Child Protection Officer of children who are missing in Education. The Arbib Education Trust reserves the right to remove a student/child from the roll in this instance. See appendix 2.

9. Punctuality across the Trust

The Arbib Education Trust views punctuality as extremely important in all members. It is imperative that all students/children arrive at the school on time to ensure learning begins promptly and to aid the smooth running of the institution.

Lateness can disrupt lessons and therefore the learning of other students/children. If a student/child is late to school they must report to Reception and sign in with the Attendance Officer/school office. A late mark will be recorded.

If a pattern of lateness is recorded then the Attendance Officer/Lead in conjunction with the Head of House/RSL/a senior member of staff or family support worker, will organise a meeting with the parents/carers.

In the Langley Academy secondary if a student is late then a sanction will be given. A student will be expected to catch up on work within reason for poor attendance and poor punctuality.

Children with specific medical needs/disabilities will be treated in line with this policy, with reasonable adjustments made where necessary.

Review Date: June 2020

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Author: Trevor O'Neill

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Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2:

Slough Borough Council – Child Missing in Education Protocols

Children Missing Education (Staff Guide)

Who are children missing education (CME)?

These are children of compulsory school age (5 – 16) who are:

- Not on a school roll
- Not being educated other than at school
- Identified as having been out of any educational provision for a substantial period of time

Why are children missing education or at risk of missing education?

- They fail to start school
- They cease to attend school either through withdrawal or exclusion (formal or informal)
- They fail to make the transition between primary and secondary school or move into a new authority
- They may be experiencing family or personal difficulties
- They may be moved from temporary accommodation at short notice
- Their whereabouts may be unknown
- They may be unable to attend school due to medical needs
- They may be educated other than at school
- They may need a co-ordinated approach for their complex needs before they are able to start school
- They are not in receipt of full-time provision suitable to age, their needs and ability
- They fail to return from holiday or compassionate leave

The law requires all children between the ages of 5 and 16 to be in full time education.

If I come across at child missing education what should I do?

1. For children leaving school with no known destination:

A well-established procedure is already in place for schools when pupils leave a school and their destination is unknown. It is essential that schools inform the Pupil Tracking Officer before removing a child from roll if a forwarding school has not been identified. Schools should initially make their own reasonable enquiries. If a child has been absent for 10 school days, schools should initially make a referral to their Attendance Improvement Officer.

If after 20 days, or where there are concerns the pupil has not been located a referral should be made to the Pupil Tracking Officer.

2. For children believed to be missing from education:

The referral procedure for children believed to be missing from education (excluding those in 1 above who leave a school with no known destination) is straightforward. It must be followed by staff within Education and Children's Services, in schools and partner agencies when children believed to be missing from education come to their attention.

Anyone who believes a child may be missing from education should refer this to the Pupil Tracking Officer by email. (diana.wingroveowens@slough.gov.uk)

If everyone follows this procedure it will enable the Local Authority to meet its statutory duties in relation to pupils missing education.

The Pupil Tracking Officer will follow up all referrals, liaising with other agencies as necessary, to establish whether or not the child really is missing from education. If the child is missing from

education, the Pupil Tracking Officer will ensure the details are passed to the appropriate team to secure suitable education.

All children missing from education will be monitored by the Pupil Tracking Officer until such time as suitable provision is made.

3. Safeguarding

If there are any concerns for the wellbeing of the child a referral should be made to the duty team at Children and Families. The Pan Berkshire Safeguarding procedures can be found at <http://berks.proceduresonline.com/>

Contacts for Children Missing Education (CME)

Queries about individual children should be referred to the Pupil Tracking Officer.

Head of School Services: Tony Browne Tel: 01753 875717

Email address: tony.browne@slough.gov.uk

Attendance Team Manager: Tony Murphy Tel: 01753 787661

Email address: tony.murphy@slough.gov.uk

Pupil Tracking Officer (CME) Diana Wingrove-Owens Tel: 01753 787669

Email address diana.wingrove-owens@slough.gov.uk