



AYESHA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

October 17

ACS Attendance  
Policy

2016

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Revised by Mr.  
S. Ahmed

## 1. Rationale

At Ayesha Community School, we recognise the strong correlation between attendance and achievement. The Department for Education (DfE) has provided the following statistics:

- of pupils who miss more than 50% of school, only 3% manage to achieve five A\* to Cs including English and maths.
- of pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school, only 35% manage to achieve five A\* to C GCSEs including English and maths.
- of pupils who miss less than 5% of school, 73% achieve five A\* to Cs including English and maths.

We monitor attendance and punctuality closely and work with parents / carers to ensure their pupils attendance is not a barrier to learning. Lateness causes disruption to pupil's education, both to the one who is late and the class they disturb.

The more time a child spends around other children, whether in the classroom or as part of a school team or club, the more chance they have of making friends and feeling included, boosting social skills, confidence and self-esteem.

While the parent is primarily responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, where school attendance problems occur, the key to successfully resolving these problems is engaging the child through collaborative working between the parent and the School.

Please note that where there is ambiguity and a difference of opinion or interpretation, the School's decision will be final. Also in the instance of the head teacher not being present, a delegated member of senior staff will take on this role.

**Parents, pupils and staff are reminded that the national average for attendance is around 95%. Any attendance falling below this figure is a cause for concern. The DfE considers that any absence falling below 10% must be treated as persistent absence (reduced from 15% since September 2015).**

**This policy must be read alongside the Safeguarding and child protection policy, particularly Appendix 3 Children missing education.**

## 2. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

A pupil should come to School every day and be on time. Parents must produce valid reasons for absence, which the School will use to determine authorisation in conjunction with a pupil's attendance record. Otherwise the absence is unauthorised.

- i) A pupil should only be absent if the reason is "unavoidable." Every half-day absence from School has to be classified by the School (not by parents), as either authorised or unauthorised. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required.

- ii) Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from School for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes. Authorised absence will be granted for compassionate reasons such as a serious family illness or bereavement.
- iii) Unauthorised absences are those that the School does not consider reasonable and for which no permission has been given. Providing a note may not be sufficient if the reason given is not "unavoidable". Unauthorised absences include:
  - Going shopping
  - Birthdays
  - Truancy
  - Looking after siblings
  - Absences which have not been properly explained
  - Religious observance other than Eid festivals (School is always closed for Eid)

**ACS has a duty to report to the Local Authority any child who fails to attend regularly or has been absent 10 consecutive school days where the absence has not been authorised and/or the reason for it is unknown.**

**Where a pupil has a child protection plan, the school will contact social services on the first day of unexplained absence.**

### **3. Procedures**

#### **3.1 Absences**

- In the Secondary School, the form tutors take registers at 8:25am. This is double checked by the secondary administrator from 8:45am-9am. The registers are again taken by the secondary administrator at 2pm each school day.
- In the Primary School, the class teachers take registers at 8:45am and again between 1pm and 1:30pm each school day.
- If the School does not receive a call from parent/carer by 10am on the day of the absence regarding the reason of absence, one of the School administrators makes a call to the pupil's home to verify reason for the absence. These verbal messages are logged.
- For absences due to medical appointments, the School will require evidence of the appointments. If no medical evidence is supplied the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- For persistent non-medical related absences (i.e. over 20% absences in any 2 week period), the parents will be required to meet the head teacher.
- At the end of each term, parents will be informed on their child's attendance for the previous term. If non-medical related absence is below 95% in any 1 term, then parents will be required to meet the head teacher.
- **The appropriate symbols for different types of absence must be used correctly in all attendance registers.**

- Class teachers in the primary school and form tutors in the secondary school are responsible for doing daily, weekly, monthly and termly tallies. They must report any concern about a pupil's absence at once to the main school office.
- The main office staff follow up on any absence, track attendance in every class per month, term and academic year; and analyse any pattern which will be investigated further and bring to the attention of the Principal and senior leaders the names of pupils with poor attendance (90% and below, which is why any attendance falling just below 95% must be pursued with diligence); persistent absence,

### **3.2 Illness**

- Parents are requested to keep child(ren) at home when unwell and may return when health improves.
- Parents must inform the School of any absences due to illness by 10am on the day of the absence.
- Parents must provide the child(ren) with a letter explaining the reason of absence on their return. Absences will not be authorised without this procedure. This needs to be shown to the administrators and the form/class teacher immediately upon return. If after a week the pupil has not brought in a note, another phone call must be made to the home, and if after this there is still no response from home these particular cases must be forwarded to the attendance officer for immediate attention and further action.
- It is the parent and the child(ren)'s responsibility to make extra effort to discover what work has been missed.

### **3.3 Lateness**

If pupils are late due to appointments or any other valid reason, parents must contact the School immediately. Persistent lateness will be flagged to the head teacher. Parents will be required to meet the head teacher to discuss matters of lateness and whether the School can support the family to improve the pupil's attendance.

Parents will be educated about attendance and lateness, informing them of the impact on their child/ren's education and the consequences which will follow.

Please note the School does not consider traffic as being a valid reason for lateness. However, the School does understand that on some rare occasions a last minute road block or accident may be unforeseeable. In this case, a child's lateness will be excused for the first day only; parents/children would be expected to plan their travel time accordingly for any day thereafter to ensure they arrive to School on time.

A pupil will be expected to attend School after/before appointments. Pupils are not allowed to take the whole day off due to short appointment e.g. GP appointments.

### **3.4 For the Secondary School**

Pupils must be in their classrooms at registration by 8:20am every morning. Pupils who arrive later than 8:25am must go into reception to sign in as late before entering their classroom.

If a pupil has a genuine reason for being late to School e.g. due to a pre-booked appointment, a letter signed by a parent should be presented. In this case, no detention will be issued. This letter can be handed in the next day if necessary.

Lateness will be monitored on a monthly basis.

- i) 1st late: No detention will be given; however the pupil will be spoken to when signing in and reminded of the importance of getting to School on time.
- ii) 2nd late: Student will be issued a 1 hour detention after School which will take place on a Friday between 3:30 – 4:30pm. Parents will be informed of this detention with a minimum notice of 24 hours.
- iii) 3rd late: Pupils will be issued a further 1 hour detention which will take place on a Friday between 3:30 – 4:30pm. Parents will be informed of this detention with a minimum notice of 24 hours and also informed the next time their child arrives late to school within the same month, she will be sent home for the day.
- iv) Any subsequent lateness within the same month will result in the child being sent home.

Any child, who has reached the stage of being sent home for lateness, will then be monitored for the following month. The policy for the next month and subsequent months, for such a pupil will be:

- i) 1st late: Pupil will be issued a one hour detention that will take place on a Friday after School from 3:30pm – 4:30pm with a minimum notice of 24 hours given to parents. On this occasion parents will also be informed the next time their child is late within that month and also anytime thereafter within the same month they will be sent home.
- ii) 2nd late: Pupil will be sent home. Parents will be called in for a meeting.

### **3.5 For the Primary School**

- Pupils must be in their classrooms at registration by 8:30am every morning. Pupils who arrive later than 8:35am must go into reception to sign in as late before entering their classroom.
- If a Pupil has a genuine reason for being late to school e.g. due to a pre-booked appointment, a letter signed by a parent should be presented. This letter can be handed in the next day if necessary.
- Lateness will be monitored on a monthly basis. A child who is late more than three times within a month will be sent home a letter at the end of the month, educating parents about attendance and lateness, informing them of the impact on their child/ren's education and the consequences which will follow.
- Any pupil, who has reached the stage of being sent a letter home for lateness, will then be monitored for the following month and subsequent months.

- If a child is sent more than one letter home regarding their lateness, parents will be called in to meet with the head teacher.

### **3.6 Detentions**

All detentions must be attended. If there is a genuine reason why a pupil is unable to attend a detention, they must inform a member of staff in reception. A parent must inform the School before the detention is due to take place, to confirm this reason.

If a detention is missed without a valid reason being provided the following will occur:

- 1st detention missed: Detention will be doubled. (If a pupil misses a 1 hour detention, this will result in her having a 1 hour detention for the next 2 weeks)
- 2nd detention missed: Pupil will be sent home, and parents will be called in for a meeting.

### **3.7 Meeting the Headteacher**

Parents must make the time to meet the head teacher when invited to a meet him/her. In the case of meeting the head teacher (or other delegated staff member) due to persistent absence or lateness, then this matter must be taken seriously by parents. There may be valid reasons for the lateness or absence and it is the parent's responsibility to inform the School. The School will always make every effort to contact parents however if parents do not attend meetings with the head teacher or avoid meeting the head teacher then pupils may be

- temporarily excluded or in severe cases permanently excluded
- referred to the Education Welfare Officer of the Local Authority

### **3.8 Parent Communications**

In the case where parents do not answer the phone and do not respond to communications from the School, then the pupil may be suspended until the parents do come to school for a meeting with one of the senior leaders of the school.

## **4. Holidays taken during term time.**

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 restrict leave of absence for family holidays further than the 10 school days a year in special circumstances previously granted. Now head teachers may not grant leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The DfE has ruled that it is up to the head teacher how many days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. Families have no "right" to such leave. The application for leave must be made in advance by the parent the pupil normally resides with".

The School does not allow pupils to travel during term time except under exceptional circumstances. This needs to be agreed in a meeting with the head teacher with a fixed penalty notice (FPN) of £100 per pupil, per week to be paid before going abroad. If the absence is for a long period, then the pupil/s will be taken off the School's admission

register and will be asked to reapply on return. Barnet Council's education services will be informed when any children are taken off the admissions register.

## **5. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- All teaching staff are responsible for monitoring the attendance of each pupil at the school.
- The main office staff are responsible for following up on any absence and the maintenance of accurate records; and for analysing the attendance data and alerting the Principal to improvements in attendance and concerns about absence on a weekly, monthly and termly basis. They are also responsible for presenting annual statistics.
- The Principal/headteacher is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the implementation of this policy annually through the safeguarding audit.
- The views of staff, pupils, parents and the Local Authority will be taken into account to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy.

Next review: July 2017 or sooner if the legislation changes