



Attendance Policy

About this policy

Date of last review: 1.4.2018
Date of next review: 1.4.2020

Introduction

Inkersall Primary Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent school attendance for all. Only by attending school regularly and punctually will children be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.

Pupil attendance data is monitored against categories including race, gender and disability, and the school will use this data to support pupils, raise standards and ensure inclusive teaching. We will tackle discrimination by the positive promotion of equality, challenging bullying and stereotypes and creating an environment which champions respect for all. At Inkersall Primary Academy, we believe that diversity is a strength, which should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit here.

Aims and Objectives

The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good school attendance and have important roles to play. The Attendance policy is designed to support good attendance in school.

Policy implementation

All staff at Inkersall Primary Academy have a role to play in supporting and promoting excellent school attendance. Staff will work to provide an environment in which all our pupils are eager to learn, feel that they are valued members of the school community and look forward to coming to school every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

The Principal is responsible for directing and co-ordinating the school's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the school. The Principal is responsible for ensuring that up-to-date attendance data and issues is shared with the Senior Leadership Team, is made available to all staff, pupils and parents, and that attendance matters will be reported termly against targets. She will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

The Education Act 1996 states that parents must ensure their children receive appropriate full-time education according to their age, ability and aptitude. This usually means ensuring a child registered at school attends regularly and punctually.

Any person who has the care of a child or who has parental responsibility is responsible for ensuring good attendance. Failure to do so may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or prosecution.



98% - 100%	95% - 98%	90% - 95%	75% - 90%	Below 75%
Excellent	Good	Worrying	Serious Concern	Serious Concern
190 Days of Education	180 Days of Education	171 Days of Education	161 Days of Education	143 Days of Education
Your child has the best chance to succeed	10 days absence / 20 sessions am/pm have been missed	19 days absence / 38 sessions am/pm have been missed <i>Your child will struggle to keep up. Makes it harder to made progress</i>	29 days absence / 58 sessions am/pm have been missed <i>Legal action will be considered</i>	47 days absence / 94 sessions am/pm have been missed <i>Court action!</i>

Please don't let your child miss out on the education they deserve.

Categories of absence

A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked as an unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the School as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the School at a later stage, the register will be amended. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the Principal.

Inkersall Primary Academy recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. **It is Inkersall's expectation that all students will achieve at least 96% attendance.**

The school recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence and can render children vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff are encouraged to challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and to encourage them to keep absences to a minimum.

A note or explanation from a pupil's home will not necessarily mean an absence will become authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence will always rest with the school

If no explanation about an absence is received by the school within 2 weeks, the absence will remain unauthorised.

Absence will be authorised in the following circumstances, where leave has been granted by the school in advance:

- a pupil is to participate in an approved performance for which a licence has been granted by the Local Authority;
- a pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance will be considered;
- where the School is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;



- where the pupil has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of school hours wherever possible; to return their child to school immediately afterwards and/or to bring him or her to school beforehand;
- where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
- where the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong;
- in other exceptional circumstances (e.g. a family bereavement) and for a strictly limited period

Any absence falling outside of these categories will be considered as unauthorised.

- Examples of reasons for declining to consider an absence as authorised include:
- no explanation has been given by the parent;
- the school is not satisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is staying at home to mind the house;
- the pupil is shopping during school hours;
- the pupil is absent for unexceptional reasons, e.g. a birthday;
- the pupil is absent from school on a family holiday;
- the pupil has been identified during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the School will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

Strategies for managing and improving attendance

The importance of attendance meeting target is regularly discussed at Inkersall Primary Academy, including in assemblies and classes. Parents are reminded regularly of the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment, and weekly attendance figures are shared with pupils and parents. We also report every child's attendance figures to parents three times a year. Pupils whose attendance is good or better receive regular. We identify those pupils who have attended school every day, and use figures to create aggregate class scores which entitle children to extra recognition in school.

The academy has a responsibility to reduce the number of students whose attendance is below 90% over the school year. Students with attendance below 90% may fall into the 'Persistent Absentee' category. This will be of additional concern if any of the child's absences are unauthorised, and will be shared with the local authority according.

First Day Calling

Inkersall uses a system of first-day calling. Parents receive a text message and if non-responsive or uncontactable through text will be telephoned on the first day a pupil is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence or to reach any alternative contacts listed, the School will text and/or phone every day of the absence. Any case of concern will be shared with the School Attendance Officer.



Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a pupil's absence over a calendar month (or shorter period if staff are concerned), with or without explanation, the Attendance Officer will invite parents to a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the reasons for the absences. Plans will be put in place with the parents and pupil to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit, usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

If there continue to be concerns about absences by the end of the specified time (or sooner if the pupil is failing to attend school at all), or if attendance falls below 90%, the Attendance Officer may make a referral to the Community Public Health Nursing Service or other appropriate external agencies.

Should absence due to medical or ill health be a cause for concern, the Attendance Officer will inform the parents/carers in writing that medical evidence will be required if their child is absent. Referrals to Education Welfare will be made wherever this is felt appropriate by the school.

Responsibility of parents/carers

Inkersall Primary Academy expects that parents and carers will:

- ensure children attend the school regularly;
- support children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the school to automatically agree any requests for absence, nor condone unjustified absence from school.

Parents and carers are expected to observe the attendance reporting process, including by:

- notifying Inkersall Primary Academy on the first day of absence, by telephoning the School before 9 00 am, or by speaking to the school office staff whilst dropping off siblings;
- ensuring children arrive at school on time at the beginning of the school day at 8:45 am, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- ensuring children are collected on time at the end of the school day at 3.15 pm;
- working in partnership with the school, for example by attending parents' meetings and consultations, signing homework diaries when asked to do so and taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contacting the School without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's school lives - Inkersall Primary Academy will endeavour to support parents to address any concerns raised with the school in this way.

Lateness and Punctuality

Pupils are expected to arrive at school for registration, on time every day. They will be recorded as late if they arrive after 9:05am. It is disruptive to children's own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Pupils who arrive after the register closes at 9:30am, will be marked as late for the session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). A pupil who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other pupils with an emerging pattern of absence. If the matter is not resolved quickly, it will be referred to the school Attendance Officer.



Pupils who arrive late for School but before the register closes are monitored for frequency of lateness. If the lateness is persistent, the parents will be requested to give adequate reason, and this is not sufficient to resolve the problem, the school Attendance Officer informed.

Sign in and sign out procedure

Pupils arriving late must report to the main school office so that an accurate record of presence on site may be maintained. Pupils leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to school later in the day must also report to the main office. Parents must sign their child out of school before they are allowed to leave the premises.

Late Collection

School staff understand that occasionally delays are unavoidable, however the academy takes persistent lateness in collecting a child very seriously. In extreme cases it may be considered as abandonment or neglect of the child.

In the event of a child not being collected at the end of the school day, school will make every effort to contact the child's parents or carers. If this proves to be impossible, school staff will try to get in touch with an alternative named contact, authorised by the child's parents or carers to collect them on their behalf.

If no contact can be made within an hour of the end of the school day, the school will have no alternative but to contact Children's Services to inform them that we have an uncollected child on the premises.

Late Collection Procedures

- 3.15pm: parents collect their child/children from the gate or corridor where the class is released
- 3.30pm: all children who have not been collected reported to the office where an initial telephone call is made. If a message has to be left because the call has not been answered, a text message will also be sent. This will be logged on the Late Collection form (Appendix 2). Children are accommodated in the in the Principal's office with the Principal or another member of the Senior Leadership Team
- 3.45pm: if the children have still not been collected, a further telephone call will be made, followed by a text if the call is not answered. This will be logged on the Late Collection form
- 4.00pm: staff will continue to contact parents at reasonable time intervals should the child have still not been collected
- 4.45pm: If a child has not been collected by this time, the incident will be logged as a safeguarding concern and Children's Services informed.

If children are repeatedly collected late without reasonable cause, a letter will be sent to parents. If children continue to be collected late on a persistent basis, a referral to Children's Services may be made.

The time a child is collected from school will be recorded on the Late Collection form together with the reason why the parent is late. The form is to be signed by both parent/carer and a staff member.

Leave of Absence

In line with Government recommendations, Inkersall Primary Academy will not authorise any leave of absence during term time unless there are clearly 'exceptional circumstances' for example, children who fall within the groups at particular risk who may have needs that require the school to grant time off. Holidays during term time are not considered as 'exceptional circumstances'.



Requests for any leave of absence should be made in writing prior to taking the leave. The school will respond to each application on an individual basis in writing, explaining why the leave of absence is authorised or not authorised and if the school therefore intends to apply for a fixed penalty notice.

A service request to the Education Welfare Service will be made if a child goes on holiday or leave of absence without authorisation from the Principal and there are no exceptional circumstances for the absence. This is trust policy, and is not at the discretion of the school.

Monitoring and Review

Roles and responsibilities

The **Attendance Officer** will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body. Data will inform future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection. Data will be segregated by gender, ethnicity, pupils with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance and analysed against trends according.

The **Principal** has overall responsibility for the policy and its implementation; for liaison with the Governing Body, parents/ carers and appropriate outside agencies and for the appointment of the Attendance Officer who will have responsibility for the handling of the daily implementation of the policy.

The **Local Governing Body** makes arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the School are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are pupils at the School. It is the responsibility of the LGB to monitor attendance data and any concerns or evaluations reported.