

Ashcroft Technology Academy Attendance and Punctuality



A Helpful Guide for Parents



This leaflet explains the academies policies regarding attendance, punctuality, medical appointments and authorised absence.

Dear Parent/Guardian

Attendance has a very high profile at Ashcroft Technology Academy. We make no apology for promoting full attendance and certainly expect all students to achieve a minimum of 96% attendance per academic year and we count on parents to support us in our aims.

Research shows that failing to attend school regularly can have a major impact on a young person's education, their future and their life chances. Examination of data from 2005 shows a strong correlation between good attendance and a young person's attainment. Young people who are absent from school without permission are easily drawn into crime and anti-social behaviour and are more likely to be unemployed after leaving school.

Punctuality also has a very high profile at Ashcroft Technology Academy. Again, research shows that those students who have good punctuality are better prepared for their day and are higher achievers. It helps them identify that education is important and develops a sense of responsibility for him/her and towards others. It sets standards they will need to maintain in which ever career path they choose.

Ashcroft Technology Academy is an "outstanding" school and I hope your son/daughter will enjoy being a part of it.

Yours sincerely

Paula Plummer
Academy Student Attendance Officer

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Reporting an Absence:

- Parents' **must** call each day of their child's absence unless a doctor's certificate is obtained. Students cannot report their own absence.
- The Academy operates a 24 hour telephone line to report student's absences. The number is 020 8812 3531. Student absence **must be reported by 9:00am**.
- If a child is absent for longer than 5 days medical evidence can and will be asked for.
- Long term absence **must** be discussed with the Attendance Officer or Educational Welfare Officer in order that measures can be put in place to help and support the reintegration of the student.

Reporting Late Arrivals:

- Parents' **must** call the academy to report a student's late arrival. Please ensure a reason for the late arrival is given.
- The Academy's 24 hour telephone line should be used to report a late arrival. A student's late arrival **must be reported by 9:00am**.
- Only medical appointments **reported by parents** will not incur a late sanction.
- Students **must** register at the late desk when arriving late up to 9:00am or at reception on arrival thereafter.

Reporting Medical/ Dental Appointments:

- Parents' **must** call in to report a student's attendance at a medical/dental appointment, through use of the above number.
- Students will be asked to provide appointment cards/ letters of appointments on arrival or when they sign out if leaving the academy early to attend an appointment.
- Students leaving early for appointments need to have authorisation from their Key Stage Manager before being allowed to leave the site.
- The Academy will only release students for up to half a day for a medical appointment unless authorisation has been sort beforehand.
- Appointments should be made after the school day finishes where possible.
- Students must register at the late desk when arriving late up to 9:00am or at the reception on arrival thereafter.
- Students attending a Medical/Dental appointment mid-morning (e.g11:30am) are expected, where possible, to attend the Academy beforehand and to return after the appointment.

Punctuality/Sanctions:

Ashcroft Technology Academy expects a joint commitment from both parents and students to ensure they arrive on time. Ashcroft is an Inner London Academy and commuting will have all the normal problems associated with a London based school. It is the responsibility of the student and parents to ensure sufficient journey time is planned taking all aspects of travel i.e. traffic, transport delays, accidents into account. **The Academy day starts at 8:35am and so students need to be on the premises prior to 08:30am.**

Sanctions:

- Students that arrive late will receive a half hour detention at lunchtime.
- **Assembly Days:** Students will receive a 1 hour detention after school. Notification will be given in advance to parents.
- Students that arrive after 9:00am will receive a 1 hour detention after school. Notification will be given in advance to parents.
- **Persistent Late:** A student is classed as a persistent late if they are late on 3 occasions within a 5 day period (excludes weekends) or being late 5 times within a 28 day period.
- A persistent late will receive 1 hour detention after school each time they are late from then on. Notification will be given in advance to parents.
- Late records are set to zero at the end of each half term and term. However any outstanding sanctions will have to be completed.
- Students that do not attend their late detentions will be given 1 day in the Internal Care and Support Unit (ICAS) + 1 hour after school.

Rewards:

Attendance and punctuality has a high profile at the Academy with a requirement of 96% per academic year. The Academy has initiated rewards schemes for excellent attendance and punctuality. Prize draws take place each month and all students meeting the criteria receive a certificate of congratulations and are entered into a random prize draw. Prizes range from vouchers for the cinema, Costa Coffee, W.H. Smiths, Chelsea football tickets, Top Shop and Amazon. At the end of the academic year the final draw includes prizes of up to £100. The only rule for any of our reward schemes is that students must be present when the draw takes place and is presented.

Mr Barker presents the prizes to the students and the winners have their photograph taken with him for a poster that is displayed on the attendance notice board. Improver certificates are sent to encourage those students that have made a marked improvement in either their attendance or punctuality and the attendance team regularly reward their efforts.

Truancy Call:

Truancy Call is a call alert system and has been in use at the academy for a number of years. It has proved to be a good aid in helping reduce truancy, reducing unauthorised absence and informing parents of poor punctuality. The Academy's policy is that students are responsible for ensuring they get themselves registered each day; therefore they need to be in the Academy on route to their form room at 8:30am each morning.

Truancy Call sends a text message to parents of students who have been marked absent in morning registration. The system gives options on how to respond to the message received. The recipient can text, send a voice message or call into the Academy. All responses are handled by the Attendance Office on a dedicated line. The Attendance Officer aims to deal with responses quickly and efficiently. The Academy understands that sometimes receiving such calls can cause anxiety and does its utmost to ensure the information sent out is correct.

Truancy:

Truancy is unacceptable and any student who truants will be sanctioned. A courtesy call is made to parents to advise them that their child has left site. Truancy is recorded on a student's personal record and remains on file until they leave the Academy. Sanctions for truancy are time in ICAS alongside requirement to make up the time they have missed plus multiple detentions after school.

The Legal Bits:

As a parent or carer, you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends school regularly and punctually, even if they are missing without your knowledge.

By law, compulsory education for all children in England ends on the last Friday in June in the school year in which the child reaches 16. (18 for those students starting secondary education from 2010)

Ashcroft Technology Academy is responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the Local Authority.

If your child is not attending regularly and punctually an Education Welfare Officer may visit or write to you.

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) can take action through the Magistrates Courts against parents or carers whose children are absent from school without good reason. They can issue fines up to £2500 or it may result in imprisonment.

If attendance problems do develop, the Academy will expect parents or carers to work actively with staff and the EWS to solve them. The EWS can be contacted on 0208 871 8306 for advice.

Penalty Charge Notice:

The government, as part of its drive to improve educational achievement wants parents to acknowledge and fulfil their responsibilities. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 allows the issue of fixed penalty notices, an alternative to prosecution that does not require appearance in court.

A notice may be served to each parent that is capable of securing their child's attendance but is failing to do so. Each parent can/will be fined. The notice imposes a fine of £50 if paid within 28 days, rising to £100 if paid after 28 days but not before 42 days. If the fine is not paid the parent will be prosecuted for the original offence of failing to secure attendance. Fixed Penalty Charges can/will be issued to parents taking students on unauthorised annual leave

Helpful Suggestions

Sometimes your child may try to convince you to let them stay at home and you may be unsure what to do. The table below gives some typical reasons and suggestions about how you could deal with them.

Reason given	Home Solution	School
No PE kit	Find alternative sports gear and write a note to PE teacher.	Contact Head of P.E. and inform them of the situation and your plan to resolve the problem.
Trouble with homework	Offer help and explain how staying off school will only make the situation worse.	Use student's diary to communicate with the subject teacher.
Feels sick	Investigate – some health problems melt away when children meet up with their friends.	Write to tutor. Contact the Welfare Officer to monitor your child and take appropriate action should they feel worse.
Birthday	Explain that a child must go to school by law otherwise it is truancy.	Birthdays can be celebrated at the weekend.
Problem with a teacher	Talk to child to discuss problem and suggest they talk to their tutor or Student Progress Manager.	If the problem persists, make an appointment to see Student Progress Manager.
School Refusing/ Poor Attendance	Explain to the child that they must go to school by showing them the legal requirements of a parent. Offer to take them to school. Assure them that members of staff will help resolve any problems.	Contact the Educational Welfare Officer / Attendance Officer immediately. Do not cover up the reasons for your child's absence. If we are unaware of a problem we cannot help solve a problem. The Academy has dedicated staff who will work to resolve a variety of issue.

Helpful Contacts:

www.parentscentre.gov.uk

www.parentlineplus.org.uk

www.childline.org.uk

www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolattendance

Advisory Centre for Education Helpline:

0808 800 5793 (open 2-5pm weekdays)

Authorised Annual Leave:

When applying for authorised annual leave the following should be noted:

An authorised annual leave form must be completed at least two weeks before the date requested.

(Forms available from reception)

Flights/holidays must not be booked/confirmed prior to authorisation being granted:

The Principle is the **only** person who can grant authorisation;

A covering letter can be included with the application;

The completed application form must be returned to the Academy reception for the attention of the Attendance Officer; the outcome of the application will be informed in writing.

If the application is successful, the student will have to complete catch up sessions to make up the work they will have missed whilst absent. The sessions are held in our ICAS facility and take place after school. Each student will need to make up 5 hours for each day he/she will have missed. Authorised leave will only be granted in Years 7 and 8. Years 9, 10 and 11 **only** in very exceptional circumstances. **Holidays will not qualify as 'exceptional circumstances'.**

Authorised annual leave is granted at the discretion of the Principle

Religious Observation:

Ashcroft Technology Academy is happy to acknowledge such occasions but only authorises a day for each religious observation day. Any extra days will be recorded as truancy and students will be sanctioned. Parents must follow the normal procedure of reporting their child's absence.

Education Welfare Officer:

The EWO is a pastoral care role working with students, parents, staff and outside agencies. Much of their time is taken looking at strategies to help long term or persistent poor school attendees. Many of our students have responsibilities for other family members, on-going health problems or issues with housing; the EWO looks into what support the school can provide in these situations. Often working with parents to help them put both structure and boundaries in place for their children, can greatly improve students attendance. The EWO can also identify students who are having emotional problems either in the Academy or at home.

Contact Details: **Juliet Fitzherbert** - Education Welfare Officer - 020 8812 3511

Welfare Officer:

The Welfare Office works very closely with all Student Progress Managers (SPMs) but especially with the SPM for Year 7 to assist making the transition from Primary School to Secondary Education as easy as possible. The Welfare Office is located near reception and any student that becomes unwell or has an accident will be sent or taken to her for treatment. The Welfare Officer will contact parents when necessary. If a student has an accident they will take home a copy of the accident report saying what has happened and any treatment given.

Sometimes students need to take prescribed medicines during the school day. The Welfare Officer is happy to administer such medication providing an 'Administration of Medicines' Consent form has been completed and returned to the Academy detailing the name of the medication, dosage and frequency. The medication should be provided in its original package. Where a student has to carry medication with them, i.e. Epi-pen or inhaler, it is important that a spare is provided for the Welfare Officer. The spare must be labelled with the name of the student.

Some students have medical needs/health issues that necessitate them having to use the lifts; leaving classes a few minutes prior to the end of the lesson to avoid the crowds in corridors; or maybe needing to use the toilet more regularly than other students. Once the Welfare Officer has been informed of these medical needs a pass will be issued to the student ensuring their particular individual needs are met. Where necessary members of staff will be informed of the student's medical/health issue. The Welfare Officer works closely with the School Nurse who comes into the Academy once a week.

Contact Details: **Sue Williams** - Welfare Officer - 020 8812 35