



Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education First Class Pre-K Attendance and Tardiness

The following information is from the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education's Alabama First Class Pre-K Program Guidelines (children.alabama.gov/firstclass/firstclass-guidelines/).

CF 3.1 Procedures for Student Attendance

Regular attendance ensures Pre-K children benefit from participating in a quality early education. Regular attendance is a school readiness skill, in addition to a good measure of parent engagement. Pre-K providers are required to formulate written procedures for addressing issues regarding attendance and tardiness. These procedures should be shared with families during orientation. They will also be reviewed on-site by the Monitor. Daily attendance records should be maintained on-site and include the dates when a child is absent and the dates/times when a child arrives late or leaves early. The attendance procedures should specify actions to be taken by the Pre-K provider if attendance issues become problematic. Teachers are encouraged to contact parents daily regarding attendance concerns. Attendance issues are best handled before they reach chronic levels. Program Directors should consult with their Monitor if they have questions concerning child attendance. For additional information concerning attendance, visit www.attendanceworks.org

The goal of the attendance policy is to assist families in establishing and maintaining regular school attendance patterns.

CF 3.2 Chronic Attendance Issues

Chronic tardiness is defined as late arrival or early departure more than 2 days per week. A definition of tardiness should be developed by the provider.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing more than 4 days per month without medical or other reasonable explanation. Chronic tardiness or absenteeism may also be defined by the established regular attendance pattern(s), e.g., if a child is late every Monday or absent every Tuesday or leaves early every Friday.

Providers are required to document efforts to assist parents/guardians of children who do not attend on a regular basis, are routinely late, or routinely leave the program early in improving attendance. A meeting with the parent/guardian should occur to determine the reason(s) for the problem and identify ways to resolve the problem.

This documentation should be shared with your Monitor. The following information should be documented:

1. Number of school days so far in the year
2. Number of days the child has been absent and/or
3. Number of days the child has been tardy
4. Information regarding parent conferences to discuss tardiness/or absenteeism and ways that were discussed to increase attendance and/or decrease tardiness.

Consecutive Absenteeism is defined as not attending class for 10 consecutive days without a medical or other reasonable explanation. OSR approval "to dismiss after 10 consecutive days of non-attendance" should be requested in writing and sent to the First Class Region Director. The following information should be included in the request.

1. Dates the child was absent from the program
2. Date teacher/director contacted parents with concerns
3. Date of documented parent meeting to discuss the absenteeism (if meeting was held)
4. Last date the child attended the program (this will be the dismissal date)

The program may only drop the child from the class roll if pre-approval is granted and received, in writing, from the OSR Region Director,

If the program director has been repeatedly unable to contact a family after the child has missed 10 consecutive days and the parent has not formally withdrawn the child, the program director should notify the Region Director and automatically withdraw the child in ASAP as of the child's last day of attendance, and a new child should be added from the waitlist within 3 school days.

CF3.3 Attendance Expectations for Children Receiving Special Education Services

Occasionally, it will be necessary for children to receive special services outside the Pre-K classroom. They may be provided in other sites in the community such as Head Start centers and elementary schools. It is acceptable for children to be absent from the

Pre-K program to receive those services as long as they are in attendance for at least 75% of the school week. The Pre-K teacher should have documentation from the parent or local school system stating where the services will be provided (location), the frequency of the services (number days per week), and the duration of the services (30 minutes, an hour, etc.). The teacher should also document the actual amount of time the student will be absent to ensure that the child will be in attendance for 75% of the school week. This information, along with a copy of the child's current IEP, should be kept on file in the Pre-K classroom.