

Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy

Attendance policy

Date adopted: March 2018

Next review date: March 2021

Policy Version Control

Policy prepared by	OAT Model Policy
Responsible committee	
Date approved by committee	
Date ratified by LGB (if required)	
Description of changes from the model policy (if any)	1.

EDWARD WORLLEDGE ORMISTON ACADEMY

Ormiston Academies Trust

Attendance policy

Policy Version Control

Policy type	Academy Model Policy
Policy prepared by (name and department)	Victoria Taylor – Ormiston Governance Department
Last review date	April 2015
Description of changes	New policy
Name and date of line manager's approval	Samuel Henson – 02/04/2015
Date of executive approval	Di Barnes – 14/04/2015
Date released	14/04/2015
Next review date	April 2018

Contents

1. Policy statement and principles	4
1.1 Policy aims and principles.....	4
1.2 Complaints.....	4
1.3 Monitoring and review.....	4
2. Roles and responsibilities.....	5
2.1 Key personnel	5
3. Key principles.....	6
3.1 Definitions.....	6
3.2 Absence procedures.....	7
3.3 Intervention	9
3.4 Rewards.....	9

I. Policy statement and principles

I.1 Policy aims and principles

We believe that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. The academy aims to raise standards in education and to ensure that students achieve their full potential. We recognise that this aim is not possible if they do not regularly attend the academy, or are persistently late.

Students are expected to attend the academy every day. It is the responsibility of parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at the academy attend regularly and are punctual. The academy endeavours to support parents and students in this.

Attendance and punctuality issues can have a detrimental effect on the education that a student receives. Evidence shows that missing out on lessons leaves students vulnerable to falling behind and the tendency for them to achieve less than those students with a good attendance record.

We are committed to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence
- Ensure every student has access to full-time education
- Act early to address patterns of absence and poor punctuality

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by OAT / the academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

I.2 Complaints

All complaints are dealt with under the **OAT Complaints Policy**.

Complaints should be made in writing and will follow the OAT complaint procedures and set timescales. The handling of complaints may be delegated to an appropriate person.

The outcome of the complaint will be communicated in writing.

I.3 Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or in the following circumstances:

- Changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- As a result of any other significant change or event
- In the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

If there are urgent concerns these should be raised to the Principal in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 Key personnel

Attendance Officer		Mrs J. Harvey
Contact Details	Email	psa@ewoa.co.uk
	Telephone	01493 603462
Vice Principal		Miss M. Warner
Contact Details	Email	viceprincipal@ewoa.co.uk
	Telephone	01493 603462
<i>Insert title (delete if not necessary)</i>		
Contact Details	Email	
	Telephone	
<i>Insert title (delete if not necessary)</i>		
Contact Details	Email	
	Telephone	

3. Key principles

The academy will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which includes all students, their personal details, the date of admission (or re-admission), information regarding parents and carers and details of the school last attended.

The academy will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each academy day and once during the second session. On each occasion we will record student attendance using the national codes. Students will not be marked present if they were not in during the period when the register is open. If there are any absences then we will follow these up in order to ascertain the reason and record the absence using the correct code on the register.

The academy day starts at 8.55 am. All students should be in their classroom at this time.

Registers are marked by 9.00 am. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

The register closes at 9.25am. Students will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend before this time. Attendance after the register closes will receive a mark to show that they are on site, but will count as an absent mark.

To be registered, the children have to enter the building through the reception area, as gates will be closed.

3.1 Definitions

A student is classed as absent if they arrive at the academy after the register has closed or if they do not attend for any reason.

An **authorised absence** is:

- An absence for sickness for which the academy has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the academy day for which the academy has granted leave.
- Religious or cultural observances for which the academy has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

An **unauthorised absence** is defined as:

- Parents keeping children from attending the academy unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the academy day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at the academy after the register has closed
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- Leaving the academy for no reason during the day

The academy defines persistent absenteeism (PA) as missing 10% or more of schooling across the year **for whatever reason**.

3.2 Absence procedures

It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the academy of a student absence and also to inform us of any changes to contact details.

First Day Absence

It is a parent/carer's responsibility to contact the academy on the first day of absence explaining why their child will be absent that day. If no contact has been made then the academy will telephone. Parents/carers are sent text messages if telephone contact cannot be made and, if there is still no communication from parents, the next emergency contact will be telephoned. Information will be recorded for future reference. If no contact is made by 10 am a home visit will be completed.

If school has been informed of an absence, parents/carers should again make contact on the second day if their child remains absent.

If on day one, a parent/carer judges their child will be/could be absent the following day too, they should point this out.

School will not know if a child is safe if a parent/carer fails to inform school of their child's absence.

Second Day Absence

If, on day 1, a parent/carer has not already made the academy aware of the absence possibly continuing in to a second day, parent/carers must contact and inform academy of their child's absence. A voicemail should not be left.

Third Day Absence

If a child's absence runs into a third day parent/carers must contact the academy and speak directly to a member of the office staff. (A voicemail should not be left).

Reminders

Reminders, requesting reasons for absence or medical evidence, at times, may be sent by the academy. In addition, reminders about the growing number of unauthorised absences and increasing frequency of late arrivals to school may also be sent.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to be aware of, and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns. In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers. If issues continue then there is a possibility that the parents/carers will be invited into an attendance support panel to find ways of resolving the concerns around attendance.

If there are a number of unauthorised absences and a support panel has not managed to resolve attendance issues then a Fast Track Attendance Panel (Legal) may be started (Legal Protocol). Parents/carers are invited into an attendance panel and, if after a set period the attendance has not improved, prosecution will be considered.

Appointments

As far as possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the academy day. Where this is not possible, a note and appointment card should be sent to the academy prior to the appointment. Students must attend the academy before and after the appointment wherever

possible. If the appointment requires the student to leave during the day, they must be signed out by an adult listed on the student's record.

Children return through main entrance, name and time of return is noted. If children leave during the school day aforementioned in reverse.

Frequent Medical Absences

Pupils will also be referred to the attendance team for repeated bouts of illness who then may suggest a meeting with the school health adviser. In some cases, parents will be asked to give permission for the school health service to speak to the child's GP. If a child is absent for 4 or more days due to school being informed of illness, parents may be expected to provide medical evidence.

In most cases, if a child's attendance drops to 92% or below, a parent/carer will be expected to provide medical evidence for every following absence, otherwise each session of absence will be unauthorised.

Religious observations

Parents must inform the academy in advance if absences are required for days of religious observance. The academy will authorise absences where a reasonable request is made.

Term time leave

We require parents to observe the term times of the academy. The academy will only authorise leave of absence during term time in exceptional circumstances. If the academy grants a leave request we will determine the length of time that the student can be away from the academy. We do not have the discretion to authorise holidays during term time.

Any requests for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis and the student's previous attendance record will be taken into account. Requests for leave will not be granted in the following circumstances:

- September and October, when pupils are settling into or back into the academy
- Immediately before and during SATS
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already above 3.5% for any reason

Leave of absence including holidays in term time

Any request for time away from school (leave of absence) must be applied for via completion of a leave of absence request form available from the academy office.

No requests for authorised leave will be considered after leave has been taken and absences will be recorded as unauthorised (unless the absence can be deemed to have been unforeseeable/ an emergency).

The criteria for FPN / Legal intervention are:

- 10 consecutive sessions of unauthorised absences.
- 15% unauthorised absence within a 6 week period.

In Norfolk, Penalty Notices are issued in accordance with the Norfolk Local Protocol (May 2014).

Parents/carers are provided with information regarding the criteria in which they will refer cases of unauthorised absence to the Local Authority for issuing of a Fixed Penalty, annually, at the beginning of each academic year or when their child joins the school.

If term time leave is not granted, taking a student out of the academy will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and may attract sanctions such as a penalty notice (fine).

3.3 Intervention

The academy recognises that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. We monitor attendance and punctuality throughout the year. We recognise that certain groups of students may be more at risk of poor attendance and will provide support and assistance wherever possible.

The academy's attendance target is 96%. Details of our absence levels can be found on the website.

Postcards will be sent home to parents in the following situations:-

- Child is late often.
- Unauthorised and authorised absences are building up.
- Medical evidence is required.

Parents / Carers are sent letters when attendance drops to 92% requesting medical evidence to authorise any future absences.

In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the attendance lead. If a student's absence drops below 90%, Support Panels are arranged where the academy has no explanation for absences.

3.4 Rewards

Good attendance is rewarded in a variety of ways:

- Praise in assembly.
- Weekly 5 dojo points for being in school all week.
- Class of the month – the class with the highest attendance each month receives a small prize.
- Individual attendance is rewarded termly with certificates.
- All children receive a prize each half term for 98% and above attendance.
- Medals at the end of each year and a prize.

Attendance Targets

The academy's attendance last year (2016/2017) was 94.5%. The academy's attendance target is 96%

The Registration System

The academy will use a computerized system for keeping the academy attendance records. The following codes / marks will be used to record attendance information (recommended by ICT solutions for use with SIMS) **present / am, \ pm. (am & pm each day is counted as two sessions).**

It is important that the child is in the classroom no later than 8.55 am – start of registration. When the register is called at 8.55 am, any child not present in the classroom will be marked as absent; the code used is **'N' (not present and no reason given).**

Class registers are not marked by the class teacher after 9 am.

Any child arriving after 9.00 am will have had to come through the main entrance and report their arrival at the office. The member of office staff responsible for registers will mark the child as late – **'L' (late before registers close). If they arrive after 9.25 am they are marked as 'U' (unauthorised late, which counts as an absence in the child's overall attendance).**



APPENDIX 1

Principal: Mrs D Kightley

8th September 2017.

Dear Parents/Carers,

Attendance at school and legal intervention

It is our duty as an academy to inform you, at the beginning of each school year, of the following:

You will be aware that the law requires all parents to ensure that their child attends school regularly. Research has shown that children often do not catch up on work missed, which can have serious consequences for their learning and progress. The Government is very clear that all schools must aim to have the highest attendance possible for all of their pupils in order for them to achieve their maximum potential.

A change from Autumn 2016 term is that if a child's attendance is 90% or below, they will be regarded as a persistent absentee. (It was 85% and below, for the last few years).

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil **will meet the criteria for legal intervention where they have:-**

1. 85% attendance or less, with at least 15% unauthorised absence over a 6 week period
- OR**
2. 10 consecutive unauthorised absences

Any pupil in Edward Worlledge Ormiston Academy who meets either criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment in 21 days, if unpaid a further invoice for £60 per parent per child is issued, both individual invoices would then have to be paid making a total payment of £120 in 28 days. (The academy receives **none** of the fine payment).

Failure to pay the total amount within the timescale will result in legal action being taken.

Our aim is to ensure that our pupils receive the most from their education and I hope we can count-on your support in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs J Harvey,
Attendance Officer.