



Attendance Policy – Pupils

Version	0.2
Approved By	Trust Board
Issue Date	30 June 2021
Review Date	30 June 2022

REVIEW HISTORY

VERSION NO.	DATE OF CHANGE	CHANGE SUMMARY	PAGE NO.
0.1	26.4.21	Draft	
0.2	19.5.21	Amendments following ET meeting	

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

Oak Multi Academy Trust is made up of a number of successful schools and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The Trust attendance policy is written to reflect the law and also the guidance produced by the Department of Education.

It is very important that you make sure your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Data will be processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation.

2 WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence (including lateness) affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence in law and may result in a fixed penalty notice (for each parent/carer) and/or prosecution. Children with low attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

3. PROMOTING REGULAR ATTENDANCE

Please refer to Appendix 1 for school-specific procedures in promoting attendance.

Unauthorised Non-Attendance at School

As a school we are trying to support parents in improving the attendance by introducing the attendance support plans. These are positive and supportive target-based plans.

Parents and pupils are supported at school and Local Authority level to overcome barriers to regular attendance, through a wide range of assessment and intervention strategies.

Where parental co-operation is either absent or insufficient in this process, sanctions are used as a means of enforcing attendance (never as a punishment).

The High Court has confirmed that schools, not parents, authorise absence. Parents may be prosecuted if they fail to ensure their child receives an education. The following sections of the Education Act 1996 apply:

- Section 444(1): if “a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil fails to attend regularly” at the school. This leads to a fine of up to £1000 per parent.
- Section 444(1A): if “the parent knows that his child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails to cause him to do so” without reasonable justification. This ‘aggravated offence’ leads to a fine of up to £2500 per parent and/or up to 3 months’ imprisonment.

The only grounds for challenge in law to an offence under Section 444 are:

- The child was absent for medical reasons (parents/carers should obtain medical evidence to cover the periods of absence);
- The Local Authority failed to provide transport when required to do so;
- The absences were due to religious observance;
- Permission was granted by the school or there was unavoidable cause.

Parenting Orders

Section 8 of the Crime & Disorder Act 1998 makes provision for the courts to impose a Parenting Order, along with other available disposals, in proceedings for non-school attendance. Such an Order requires parents to attend parenting guidance/counselling classes over a specified period of time and could also include specific conditions (e.g. the requirement to escort their child to school each morning).

Education Supervision Orders (ESO)

The Children Act 1989 makes provision for the LA to consider, in all non-school attendance legal proceedings, whether it is appropriate to apply to the Family Proceedings Court for an ESO as a means of attempting to ensure a child’s regular school attendance. This application would be made separately to any prosecution in relation to non-school attendance.

An ESO is made in respect of a child and allows the LA to provide support and give directions to a child and his/her parents to make sure that the child attends regularly.

4. ABSENCE PROCEDURE

Please refer to Appendix 1 for school-specific procedures in promoting attendance.

5. HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

- 5.1 Following updated Government guidelines in September 2013, parents have no entitlement to take their child on a holiday during term time. All requests for leave during term time must be made in advance and will be considered on an individual basis and will only be authorised if the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher considers there are exceptional circumstances. Additional evidence may be requested by the school to support these requests.
- 5.2 Requests – please refer to school-specific guidance in [Appendix 1](#).
- 5.3 Any leave taken without prior agreement of the school or more than that agreed will be coded as unauthorised and the school will notify Leicestershire County Council or Leicester City Council (depending on which school) who may issue a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices are issued per parent per child at £120 each (discounted to £60 if paid within 21 days). If no payment is received, the Local Authority will refer the case directly to the Magistrates Court for the purposes of a criminal prosecution.

6. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TARGETS

The Trust target for all its schools for 2021-22 is 96% with some schools aspiring to achieve higher.

APPENDIX 1: School-Specific Guidance

BROOKSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Doors open at 8.50am and close at 9.00am

Late Arrivals

Any child arriving after school registration has closed at 9.00am will be recorded in school, but marked as a half day absence.

Absence Reporting

Parents/Carers must report their child's absence before 9.30am. This can be done by leaving a message on the absence voicemail, emailing the school office or coming to the school office. Please state the child's name, class and reason for the absence. Please keep the school updated daily. This is to safeguard your child.

If a child is absent we will:

- telephone Parents/Carers if we have not heard from you on each day of absence.
- monitor absence and write to parents to inform you that your child's absence has fallen below the acceptable figure of 95%.
- discuss strategies for improvement, with Parent/Carers, before referring.

MANOR HIGH SCHOOL

School open to students from 8.30am

School start time: 8.40am

Register taken at 8.40am and closed at 9.30am

Absence Reporting

If your child is absent, you must contact the school and leave a message explaining the absence on either the absence line or School Gateway.

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone you on the first day of absence if it is not reported.
- Write or telephone you if we are concerned about your child's attendance to alert you to a concerning emerging pattern or level of absence.
- At 9.30am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the regulations, if your child arrived after this time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but it will not mark it as a present mark, it means they have an unauthorised absence.
- If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with the House Manager.
- If you are having problems in getting your child to school on time, please approach us at any time.

- If a student is late for registration or a lesson, they will be issued with a FINE (Failure in Normal Expectations) break time detention (refer to behaviour policy for further information on FINES).

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully throughout the pastoral system. Some of our PA students and their parents/carers are subject to an action plan to improve the attendance.

Late Arrivals

Any children arriving after 9.30am will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but it will not mark it as a present mark, it means they have an authorised absence.

Persistent late records will result in a meeting with the House Manager

Parents having problems getting their child(ren) into school on time should contact the school.

Pupils that are late for registration or a lesson will be issued with a FINE break time detention.

Request for Holidays During Term Time

Requests should be made in writing using the Absence Request Form found on the school website and returned to Vanessa Mehta, Deputy Headteacher.

OVERDALE INFANT SCHOOL

School start time: 9.05am

School finish time: 3.15pm Reception
3.20pm KS1

Late Arrivals

The register marking time begins at 9.10am and closes at 9.15am. Classroom doors will close at 9.10am. Any child arriving after 9.10am must enter via the front entrance and they will be signed in using our electronic signing in system. Children arriving after registers have closed at 9.15am will be recorded on our system using a L (Late) code. If a child arrives after 9.30am they will be recorded as late using a U (Unauthorised absence) code with the number of minutes late recorded against the code.

Late Pickups

If parents are late collecting children at the end of the day, the children will be taken to the school office and will wait outside the Headteacher's office. Reception children will be taken to the office at 3.25pm and KS1 children will be taken to the office at 3.30pm. If a child is collected from the office, they will need to be signed out via our electronic system and a reason for the lateness needs to be given. If a child has not been collected by 3.35pm the office staff will ring the named contacts until someone is able to collect the child.

Absence Reporting

- Parents need to contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence with a full explanation for the absence. If no one is available to answer the phone in the office a voicemail should be left on the school answer phone. Alternatively, parents are encouraged to contact the school using the office email address: reception@overdale-inf.leicester.sch.uk The school will need to be contacted on each further and subsequent days of absence.
- NB: Notes/letters provided by parents/carers in explanation of absence will be stored on your child's file. Failure to provide a valid reason for your child's absence on the first day they are away from school is unacceptable and will result in an unauthorised attendance mark until such time as the school deems a valid explanation has been given.

Unauthorised Absences

If your child is absent and we have not been notified as to why (see above for notification procedure), we will:

- E-mail or telephone you on the first day of absence (and on subsequent days) until an explanation is provided.
- Write to you if we are concerned about your child's attendance or an emerging pattern of high level absence.
- Invite you into school to discuss the situation with our Head Teacher and/or Deputy Head Teacher/Educational Welfare Officer if absences persist.

Overdale Infant School Escalation Process

Below 95%	School will contact the child's parents in writing highlighting the drop in attendance and reminding the importance of regular attendance. Child's attendance will be monitored closely for improvement.
Below 90%	School will contact the child's parents in writing highlighting the further drop in attendance and requesting that any future and further absence be documented with supporting medical evidence.
Below 85%	Where absence cannot be accounted for the school will contact the child's parents/carers in writing informing them that their child has been referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). The EWO will then contact parents to arrange an attendance panel meeting between themselves, parents and the school.
Below 80%	Where an attendance panel meeting has already taken place but there has been no improvement the school will seek advice from the

	Educational Welfare service, this may result in the issue of a fixed penalty notice to the parents for non-attendance.
Persistent lateness	School will contact the parents in writing where there is a pattern of persistent lateness reminding parents of the importance of arriving at school on time. If the child continues to arrive late for school, the EWO may then contact the parents to arrange a visit or a meeting.

OVERDALE JUNIOR SCHOOL

School start/finish time:

Year 3 - 9:05am/3:20pm

Year 4 - 9:00am/3:10pm

Year 5 - 8:55am/3:05pm

Year 6 - 8:50am/3:00 pm

Absence Reporting

All absences must be reported to the school, verbally or in writing, by 9.30am on the first day of absence. The Secretary will telephone or text any unreported absences after 9.30am to ensure the child is safe and with a responsible adult.

Regulations state that if the school is not informed by parents/carers of visits to the doctor, dentist, illness, holidays etc. then these absences automatically become unauthorised. It is therefore essential that any reason for absence (even short absences) be given in writing, with details of reason and date(s).

Late Arrivals

All pupils arriving late must enter the school via the front entrance.

The School receptionist will record the name, date, time, and any reason(s) in the Late Book.

This also provides accurate records in case of fire or other emergencies on the premises.

The Late Book is kept in the school office and office staff will make an entry should a parent/carer bring their child into school outside the normal school times.

The class teacher records lateness in the class register.

Late Pickups

A record is kept in the school office of any children who are collected late at the end of the school day. After approximately 10 minutes a telephone call is made to parents/carers to determine if there is a problem or how quickly the child can be collected.

If a child is regularly late in being collected from school, the class teacher or Headteacher will contact parents/carers to request a meeting to discuss the situation.

WOODLAND GRANGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Doors open at: 8.50am

School finishes at: 3.15pm

Late Arrivals

- Minutes late are recorded from 8:50am.
- Persistent lateness is monitored and recorded.
- Arrivals after 10:30am are recorded as 'U' resulting in unauthorised absence for the morning. The school must be notified of any appointments in advance.
- Continued lateness will be referred to the Headteacher with a letter home to parents requesting a meeting to discuss an action plan for improvement.

Absence Reporting

- Parents to contact the school before 9:10am. This can be via the school gateway app, email, or by leaving a message on the School's telephone.
- No contact with the school by 9:10am will result in an automated text message to parents/carers requesting reason for absence.
- No response to automated text by 9:30am will result in a telephone call to parents/carers.
- Should no response to either, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- Isolated cases will result in a home visit.

Authorised Absences

- Request for leave to Headteacher by submitting a Leave of Absence Request form. Only exceptional circumstances will be authorised.
- Further evidence may be requested or meeting with the Headteacher to establish reason for request.
- Attendance percentage to date will also determine if leave can be authorised.
- No more than one request per academic year which must also not exceed 5 days.
- Disclosure of visiting Country will be required due to Covid and the continuously changing quarantined Countries.

Unauthorised Absences

- Unauthorised absence is monitored and recorded.
- Letter of concern issued to parent/carers.

- A meeting with the Headteacher will be arranged to discuss ways of improvement.
- Should unauthorised attendance drop by 10%, we will notify the Pupils Missing Education Department at County Hall.
- Continued unauthorised absence will result in a referral for a Penalty Notice to be issued by Leicestershire County Council, Attendance Court Team.

Late Collection

- 3:20pm telephone call to parents.
- Persistent lateness will result in the child/ren being sent to Owls Hoot Aftercare where parents will be invoiced, this will be monitored and recorded.
- Further late collections will result in a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss improvements.