

Cliff Park Ormiston Academy

Attendance Policy

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Next review date: **September 2021**

Policy Version Control

Policy type	Academy Model Policy
Policy prepared by (name and department)	Jayne Cooper – Attendance and Logistics Manager – Ormiston Sandwell Academy
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Appendix 1 Model letter (first absence)

Appendix 2 Model letter (absence concern)

Appendix 3 Model letter (persistent absence)

1. Policy statement and principles

1.1 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 and Cliff Park Ormiston Academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

1.2 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.

1.3 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

<i>Principal</i>		Ms Tamsin Poulter
Contact Details	Email	principal@cliffparkoa.co.uk
	Telephone	01493 661504
<i>Vice Principal</i>		Mrs Zoe Cameron
Contact Details	Email	ZCameron@cliffparkoa.co.uk
	Telephone	
<i>Attendance Officer</i>		Ms Laura Bullen
Contact Details	Email	lbullen@cliffparkoa.co.uk
	Telephone	01493 661504

3. Key principles

The academy will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which includes all students, their personal details, to include at least three telephone numbers for different adults, to ensure the academy can always contact someone in the event of an emergency, 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 either with First Day Absence text message or a telephone call to parents/carers in order to ascertain the reason and record the absence using the correct code on the register.

The academy day starts at 8.40am. All students should be in their classroom at this time.

Registers are marked by 8.50am. Students will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.

The register closes at 9.10am. 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 (U), but will count as an absent mark.

Students arriving late to the academy should report to reception where a member of the Attendance Team will provide them with a slip. The student should then give this to the class teacher to confirm they have been registered at the academy.

The afternoon registration will be at 2.00pm

The registers will close at 2.10pm

Students who are late will receive a break late detention. Students arriving after 9.10am will receive a 30 minutes after school detention.

3.1 Definitions

A student is classed as **absent** if they arrival 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**.

Persistent lateness is defined by the academy as students who have 5 or more late marks recorded in one academic year. This may lead to the privilege of the late code (L) being withdrawn and replaced by a 'U code' which is classed as an unauthorised absence.

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.

Parents/Carers are asked to contact the Academy before 9am on EACH day that their child is absent, informing of a reason for absence and when their child will be returning to the academy.

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 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.

Should a student arrive late to the academy following an appointment, they should report to Reception where a member of the Attendance Team will provide them with a slip. The student should then give this to their class teacher to confirm that they have been registered in school.

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. Parents should inform the academy P^{RI}OR to any absence due to religious observance. The academy will usually authorise one day in these instances.

Term time leave

We require parents/carers 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:

- During Year 7 when a student is settling into the academy
- Immediately before and during assessment periods
- When a student's attendance record shows any unauthorised absence.
- Where a student's authorised absence record is already above 2% for any reason

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.

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 absences levels can be found on our website, or are available from Miss Bullen.

When a student is absent for the first time a letter [appendix 1] will be sent outlining the support that is available to them to ensure good attendance. If a student's absence then drops below 93% an attendance concerns letter [appendix 2] will be sent. If no improvement is seen, parents will receive a first warning letter [appendix 3] informing them that if no improvement is seen a referral to the Local Authority will be made to issue a Penalty Notice or commencement of Fast Track proceedings unless medical evidence is provided.

In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents/carers to speak to the Attendance Officer. If a student's absence drops below 90%, the local Attendance and Entitlement Officer (AEO) will be informed. Once referred to the AEO, the AEO will attempt to resolve the situation by agreement. If the situation cannot be resolved and attendance does not improve, the AEO has the power to issue sanctions such as prosecutions or penalty notices.

3.4 Rewards

The academy acknowledges 100% attendance in the following ways:

- Credits will be rewarded every term for all students with 100% attendance. These credits can then be used to purchase reward items.

Good attendance and punctuality will be rewarded in the following ways:

- A form from each community with the best attendance for the previous week will each receive an attendance trophy.

Trips and events, including Year 11 Prom, are a privilege. Where attendance drops below 93% these privileges may be taken away.

«salutation»
«address_block»
«date_of_printing»

Dear «salutation»,

I am writing with reference to «chosen_forename»'s recent absence(s) from the Academy and to take this opportunity to give you some information regarding the provision we are able to make for students, should «chosen_forename» feel unable to attend in the future:-

(Add/delete as appropriate)

- If a student is feeling a little unwell in the morning, they may well improve during the day and therefore, it is usually better to send them to the Academy and we can provide a quiet working area until they feel able to re-join their classes.
- We also provide 'stationary' areas for students to work in, should mobility be an issue so that they do not have to move around the Academy. We would also allow students to leave lessons early to avoid crowds should they have an injury.
- We have a full time First Aider at Cliff Park Ormiston Academy that can assess the condition and, with your authorisation, administer medication should «chosen_forename» feel unwell after arriving at the Academy
- We also have Mentoring Support for any students who have been absent due to sadness from a bereavement or other personal circumstances.
- Community Assistant Principals and Community Leads are always willing to support students and therefore should «chosen_forename» have any problems or issues that may prevent «him_her» from wanting to attend, please contact Cliff Park Ormiston Academy immediately so that these problems or issues can be resolved.

We have a strong network of staff here at Cliff Park Ormiston Academy, and I am sure you will agree that whatever problem «chosen_forename» may encounter, there is support available to «him_her», to ensure regular attendance to the Academy.

Yours sincerely,

Parent/Carer of «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

I notice, with concern that «chosen_forename» has missed several sessions at school. Although you may have made us aware of the reason for absence, we would like to bring to your attention that this has resulted in an attendance percentage of only «percentage_attendance»%.

As you know «chosen_forename» is now in Year «year» which is a very important year and it has been proven statistically that good attendance is a key factor in a student reaching their full academic potential. We are of course concerned and wish to encourage «chosen_forename» towards improving «his_her» attendance rate.

In order to promote an improvement in «chosen_forename»'s attendance please note we will require any future absence to be supported by one of the four statutory defences. You should be aware that the only defences available in law are -

1. That the absences are with leave (ie that they have been agreed by the Principal).
2. That the absences are because of sickness or unavoidable cause. Please provide evidence to support absences due to ill-health. This can be through a copy of an appointment card or prescription or information from a medical practitioner.
3. That the absences fall on days of religious observance for the religion to which parents belong.
4. That the child is entitled to free transport to school and the LEA have failed to provide this.

If absences do not fall into any of these four categories or the school have not been informed of reasons for absence, absences will be marked as unauthorised. As a parent you have a responsibility in law to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

I hope that by making you aware of our concern that we can work together to ensure that «chosen_forename»'s attendance improves. Please call our Attendance Officer or the Assistant Principal of the «house» Community if you wish to discuss «chosen_forename»'s attendance further.

Yours sincerely,

Parent/Carer of «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»
«address_block»

Dear «salutation»

Re: «chosen_forename» «chosen_surname»

It has come to our notice that the attendance of «chosen_forename» at Cliff Park Ormiston Academy has become unsatisfactory. Between ***** and ***** «he_she» has attended ** of the «total_possible» sessions that the Academy has been open. This is an attendance level of «percentage_attendance»%.

«chosen_forename»'s attendance is extremely worrying as «he_she» is at high risk of underachieving throughout «his_her» education as a result. There are clear links between poor attendance and attainment. Government research shows that over 90% of students with over 95% attendance gained at least 5 A* - C grades at GCSE, compared with only 31% of pupils whose attendance was 90% or lower.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind you that Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on all parents to ensure that their children receive an efficient, full-time education. Parents who are seen to fail in their duty can be issued with a Penalty Notice instead of being prosecuted in the Magistrates Court for this offence.

I therefore warn you that unless there is an improvement in «chosen_forename»'s attendance between now and ***** we will instruct the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice under Section 444A of the Education Act 1996. This means that your «son_daughter» should have no further unauthorised absence from the academy in this period.

You should be aware that if a Penalty Notice is issued there is no right of appeal. If the penalty of £60 is not paid within 21 days the amount increases to £120. If after 28 days no payment is made the matter will be brought before a Magistrates Court.

If you have any questions regarding this notice please contact me at the academy on the above number.

Yours sincerely,