



Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Denes Academy

Supporting Student Attendance Policy

Policy type	Academy Model Policy
Policy prepared by (name and department)	Jayne Cooper – Attendance and Logistics Manager - Ormiston Sandwell Academy
Last review date	Sept 2017
Description of changes	<p>Key Principals Update to the Key Principals to be more specific about the actions of the academy and the expectation that the parents will provide the phone numbers of three different adults.</p> <p>Update of the percentage for Persistent Absence (PA) and a definition for persistent lateness and its potential consequences.</p> <p>3.2 Absence Procedure Expectation added for parents to call before 9am on each day of absence, what students should do if they arrive late and the process around religious observations</p> <p>3.3 Intervention Updated with the introduction of template letters (appendix 1-3) and return to school interviews after a period of absence.</p>
Name and date of line manager's approval	Sarah Bloomer – September 2017
Date of executive approval	Jason Howard – September 2017
Date released	5 th October 2017
Next review date	September 2020

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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:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence
- Ensuring every student has access to full-time education
- Acting early to address patterns of absence and poor punctuality

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by Ormiston Denes Academy and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

1.2 Complaints

All complaints are dealt with under our Complaints Policy.

Complaints should be made in writing to the Principal and will follow the 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>Assistant Principal - Development, Behaviour & Welfare</i>		Mr James Lowden
Contact Details	Email	Jlowden@ormistonden.es.co.uk
	Telephone	01502 574474
<i>Attendance and Family Support Officer</i>		Miss Michelle Halsey
Contact Details	Email	MHalsey@ormistonden.es.co.uk
	Telephone	01502 574474
<i>Assistant Attendance Officer</i>		Mrs Julie Collins
Contact Details	Email	JCollins@ormistonden.es.co.uk
	Telephone	01502 574474

3. Key principles

The academy will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which include students personal details, including where possible, at least three telephone numbers for different adults, to ensure that 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 we will follow these up with a telephone call, text or email

to parents/carers in order to ascertain the reason and record the absence using the correct code on the register.

A home visit will be carried out for any students who are unexpectedly absent, should there be no answer when staff visit the home, a call should be made to the police.

The academy day starts at 08:50am. All students should be in their classroom at this time.

The register closes at 09:05am. 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. Consequences for lateness are applied in accordance with our Behaviour policy.

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

Persistent lateness is defined by the academy as students who have 6 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.

Ormiston Denes Academy has adopted the Suffolk County Council's Penalty Notice Protocol for unauthorised absences from the academy. This means that the academy may make referrals to the Education Attendance Service without warning or a monitoring period. Referrals received will be issued with an immediate penalty notice fine for unauthorised absence in the following situations:

- Where a student has taken holiday during term-time for 3 or more days and the absence was not authorised by the academy.
- Where a student has missed 6 or more sessions (3 school days) and the absence is not authorised.

- Where a student is persistently late to the academy.

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 8.30am on EACH day** that their child is absent, informing of reason for absence and when their child will be returning to the academy.

Appointments

We expect all medical and dental appointments to be made outside of the academy day (including after school activities). Where the academy authorises the appointment, appropriate medical evidence will be required and expect students to attend the academy before and after the appointment wherever possible.

Should a student arrive late to the academy following an appointment, they should report to Reception.

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 PRIOR to any absence due to religious observance. The academy will usually authorise one day in these instances.

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;

- During year seven 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 4% 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 aim is that all students have 100% attendance. Details of our absence levels can be found on Go for Schools, or are available from Miss M Halsey - Attendance Officer.

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. We regularly update parents and carers of their child's attendance, where attendance drops to a level that causes concern; parents would be expected to attend a meeting with the attendance team. If no improvement is seen, parents will receive an unauthorised letter [appendix 2] informing them of the decision to unauthorise any further absences unless medical evidence is provided.

Following each student absence, a member of Pastoral Staff may carry out a Return to School Interview (RTSI) to discuss the absence and to offer any support. Following three periods of absence the RTSI will be carried out by a member of SLT.

In the case of persistent absence, arrangements will be made for parents to speak to the Attendance Officer. It may become necessary for the pastoral teams to become involved in a supportive capacity to promote improved attendance.

If a student's absence continues to drop, the Attendance Officer (AO) will consider more specialist intervention by the local authority; this may include fast track or an attendance supervision order.

3.4 Rewards

The academy acknowledges 100% attendance in the following ways:

- Weekly prize draws
- Half termly Reward Events
- Termly Golden Ticket Events
- Praise Texts and Letters
- Annual Celebration Evening
- Rewards Letters
- Invites to specialist events

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

- Weekly Prize draws
- Praise texts and letters

Trips and events are a privilege. Where attendance drops below 96% these privileges may be taken away. Some specific events have entry requirements where attendance and punctuality may be included.

Appendix 1

«Parental_addressee»

«Number» «Street»

«District»

«Town»

«Postcode»

Dear «Parental_Salutation»

One of the goals of Ormiston Denes Academy is to help students have a successful educational experience. In order to do this, regular daily attendance is essential. Today «Forename» was absent from school. We hope that «Forename» has now made a full recovery and wanted you to be aware of the impact missing a day's learning can have. Missing one day in a term equates to a loss on average of 0.71%

We are sending this letter as a matter of information for you and as we don't want irregular attendance to interfere «Forename»'s educational progress and success.

Your cooperation in helping us give «Forename» the best education possible is greatly appreciated.

At Ormiston Denes Academy we support student's attendance in a variety of ways including:

- Non-teaching Pastoral Team
- Pathways Centre which provides social and emotional support for students
- School Nurse
- School Counsellor
- Specialist medical room, staffed by lead First Aiders

We appreciate your support and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01502 574474.

Yours sincerely



Mr J Lowden

Assistant Principal – Development, Behaviour & Welfare

Appendix 2

«Parental_Salutation»

«Number» «Street»

«Town»

«County»

«Postcode»

Dear «Parental_Salutation»

In a weekly attendance meeting it was noted that «Forename» has had a number of absences. Although these may have been authorised it is important that any possible attendance issues are addressed quickly so that progress at school is not endangered.

When a student's attendance rate falls below 90% it is normal school policy to consider referral to the Education Attendance Service. Currently, the attendance rate for «Forename» is %. Hopefully, «Forename»'s attendance rate will quickly improve, but on the advice of the Local Authority Education Attendance Service we are reluctant to authorise further absences without medical or other valid evidence.

If however, there are still problems and you should wish to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Lowden', written in a cursive style.

Mr J Lowden

Assistant Principal – Development, Behaviour & Welfare