

Attendance Policy

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Outstanding Achievement for All

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1. Statement of intent

- 1.1 At Oak Academy we recognise that for our students to fulfil their potential then regular attendance to the academy is vital. We are committed to offering all our students full time education to maximise their opportunities.
- 1.2 Our Attendance motto of **Attend Today. Achieve Tomorrow** is used to convey to our students and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We want to inspire our students to have High Expectations and embrace a culture of regular attendance which is an important life skill.
- 1.3 Our aim is to:
 - Promote positive attendance, encouraging 100% in line with Ofsted requirements.
 - Reduce all absences by working with our students and their parent/carers in a timely manner.
 - To support positive punctuality.
 - Provide a welcoming and caring environment where all our students feel valued and safe.
 - To implement an effective system of rewards for consistently high attendance, 100%, and for those students where an improvement has been made with daily attendance or time keeping.
- 1.4 As a community we share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent academy attendance and punctuality. We are here to support our parent/carers to ensure their children of compulsory age attend regularly and meet their legal duty. Where necessary referrals will be made where this support is not provided.

2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1 This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department of Education (DFE) and refers to the statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. DfE guidance (2013) states that, “[pupils] need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less...” Under Section 7 of the Education Act (1996), parents/carers have a legal duty to make sure that their child(ren) attend(s) the Academy on a regular and full-time basis. Every half-day absence must be classified by the Academy as either authorised or unauthorised. The Academy must record the reason for any half-day absence.

3. Types of absence

- 3.1 Each absence is recorded by the academy as being authorised or unauthorised.
- 3.2 Authorised absences will only be given where there is a reason including illness, medical/dental appointments, religious observance, traveller students travelling for occupational purposes, emergencies or other specific reasons.
- 3.3 Unauthorised absences are those which the academy feel are not legitimate and where parent/carers are keeping students off school unjustifiably. No authorisation can be given. These include; truancy, where an absence has not been explained, short breaks and holidays, day trips, birthdays, shopping and looking after siblings.

4. Academy procedures

- 4.1 Attendance Register - The Attendance register is taken at the start of the first session of each school day, this is at 8.30am. It is taken again for a second session in the afternoon. Students must arrive in school by 8.25am in order to be punctual to their tutor time.
- 4.2 Unplanned absence - Parent/carers must notify the academy on the first day of an unplanned absence. For example, if your child is unwell and is unable to attend, the school must be informed by 8.30am. This can be done through the following channels:
- Telephone: **01202 242300**
 - E mail: attendance@leaf.bournemouth.sch.uk
- 4.3 Any absence due to illness will be authorised. Where there are repeated absences due to reported illness, medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence maybe requested if the authenticity of the illness is in doubt. In exceptional circumstances the absence could be recorded as unauthorised.
- 4.4 Planned absence – The Education (Pupil Regulations) 2006 and the DfES Circular 10/99 state that a leave of absence can only be granted at the discretion of the Academy Governing Body/Principal. DfE guidance (Nove 2013) further states that: "A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion". No planned absence from the academy will be authorised unless in exceptional circumstances.
- 4.5 Parent/carers must write or email the Principal, Mrs Hayley Richley, if such a request is to be made. The academy considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principals discretion and in line with Local Authority guidance.
- 4.6 Any holidays must be taken out of term times, there is no automatic entitlement in law to take time off during academy time. IF the unauthorised holiday is taken which results in your child having 5 or more days off throughout the academic year a penalty notice will be issued through Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole local authority. The Penalty Notice can be a fine of up to £120 per parent per child.
- 4.7 Medical/dental appointments – We strongly encourage that wherever possible any medical appointment is made out of academy hours. Parent/carers are required to contact the academy to provide advance notice where this is not possible and the student should be out of the academy day for the minimum amount of time. We do not expect students to be absent all day for a medical appointment.
- 4.8 Students must sign in and out at reception where a pass will be provided allowing a student to be off site.
- 4.9 Lateness and punctuality - Students are required to be at their desk for the start of the academy day at 8.30am. Any student arriving after this time is recorded as late. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a student misses the start of the day, they can miss essential work or information.

- Students who do arrive late must report to the main reception and sign in.
 - Class teachers will record this late mark on SIMs, adding the minutes late which is monitored.
 - At 8.50am the registers will be closed. If this is a regular occurrence a Fixed Penalty Notice or prosecution could be issued. A student arriving after that time will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence, in accordance with Regulations.
 - Students arriving late to school will have a lunch time detention, failure to attend will result in a 60 minute after school detention the following day.
 - Late letter will be sent to parent/carers of students who continue to be late.
 - Students who are consistently late will be placed on a family liaison officer punctuality report to mentor. Parent/carer meetings will take place.
 - Unauthorised late marks could lead to parent/carer being prosecuted.
- 4.10 Unauthorised absence - The academy will follow up on any student who is absent without reason. The academy has a legal requirement to know that all of our students are safe to ensure that any safeguarding action is taken where necessary.
- 4.11 Legal Sanctions - The academy has the authority to fine parent/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child. If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be paid directly to the local authority.
- 4.12 The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice rests ultimately with the Principal, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:
- A number of unauthorised absences occurring throughout the academic year.
 - Holidays in term time.

The local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent/carer or withdraw the notice if the payment has not been made after 28 days.

5. Promoting positive attendance

- 5.1 Attendance assemblies demonstrate the successes with positive attendance.
- 5.2 Texts, postcards, social media, certificates, a termly rewards assembly and canteen vouchers are issued to students who have positive attendance and those students who have made a significant improvement.
- 5.3 An attendance board is updated regularly displaying students with figures displayed.
- 5.4 An attendance focus week takes place in the autumn term to encourage all students to attend regularly.
- 5.5 Tutor time focuses on attendance. Data is provided weekly and mentoring is offered to support identified students. Form tutors are utilised as the first point of contact to emphasise the importance of positive attendance.
- 5.6 Attendance hub meetings with the relevant family liaison officer offers support to low attending students.

- 5.7 The parent/carers of students with poor attendance are invited in to draw up Attendance Support plans with the Family Liaison officer.
- 5.8 There is a Parents Evening focus on attendance. Appointments are made with the parent/carer and the family Liaison officer for identified students
- 5.9 Year 6 Transition – Meetings take place to lay out our expectations and put support in place where poor attendance has taken place in a student's primary school.

6. Reintegration following significant periods of absence

- 6.1 Oak staff will work closely with families and students who have been absent for an extended period of time to ensure a successful re-integration back into school.
- 6.2 A phased return will be offered if necessary.
- 6.3 An attendance inclusion support plan will be used to identify appropriate interventions and to agree a timescale to review the reintegration plan.
- 6.4 External agencies will be liaised with, if appropriate.
- 6.5 Individual health care plans will be put in place where appropriate.

7. Attendance monitoring/absent procedures

- 7.1 The attendance officer, with support from the family liaison officers monitor student absence daily. If the academy has not had contact from the parent/carer:
 - A text will be sent at 9.00am if no contact and no reason has been received. On receiving this text parent/carers are requested to contact the academy to advice of the reason.
 - A phone call is made if there has been no response from the text. This will be made between 9.45 and 10.15am. Safeguarding is a priority at Oak and we need to ensure all our students are safe and well. This is also an expectation from the local authority.
 - A 'safe and well' home visit will take place by one of the family liaison officers on the same day or after 3 days of absence depending on the needs of student. A list of students requiring home visits will be emailed to the FLO's by 10.30am each day.
 - If there are 5 or more consecutive days of absence from the academy due to illness or a medical reason, evidence maybe requested.
 - If a student fails to attend school for an examination, a telephone call will be made and any other intervention, for example, a home visit will be carried out.
 - If attendance continues to deteriorate then our attendance team will send a letter advising of our concerns.
 - If there is no improvement this will be followed up with another letter and a phone call inviting the parent/carer in for a meeting with a member of the Inclusion team.
 - If there is still no improvement and continued unauthorised absence this would lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice warning letter prior to a Fixed Penalty Notice through the local authority.

- When a student returns to school after a leave of absence, a signed note, email or phone contact must be made by the parent/carer explaining the reason for absence.
 - If a student is going to be absent from the academy for a long period of time, due to ill health, the academy will liaise with the medical professionals (if appropriate) and support the student in providing work when absent
- 7.2 The Vice Principal, Attendance Officer and Heads of Year review the attendance of all students weekly. If the attendance of a student falls below 95% the reasons for the absence are investigated.
- 7.3 Persistent absence - When a student misses 10% of their schooling across the academic year, they are termed as a 'persistent absentee'. This is extremely detrimental to a student's academic progress. Support from the parent/carer is vital at this time. The parent/carer will be invited in for a meeting with a family liaison officer.
- 7.4 Child Missing Education - As an academy we liaise with the local authority and refer any child missing from education for 10 consecutive days.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 Students

- Students are expected to attend punctually and for 100% of the academic year unless there is a genuine illness or exceptional circumstance. It is vital that students understand that they will not be able to access their curriculum fully and this will be detrimental to their academic progress. Students who frequently attend school feel more connected to their community and develop strong social skills and friendships, which are important life skills.

8.2 The attendance officer and family liaison officers

- Reward students for positive attendance and improvement.
- Attend assemblies weekly to promote 100% attendance.
- Update the Attendance board weekly.
- Monitor attendance data at the academy and at individual student level and supplying reasons why individual students are not meeting expectation.
- Send the appropriate communications home.
- Complete 'safe and well' home visits where appropriate.
- Arrange calls and meetings with parent/carers to discuss attendance issues.
- Complete attendance inclusion support plans and regularly review actions and interventions that have been agreed.
- Work with external agencies to tackle persistent absence.
- Liaise with the local authority where applicable.
- Advise the principal when to issue fixed term- penalty notices.
- Monitor SIMS to ensure that the correct codes are in place.
- Ensure that all data and attendance information is available for the weekly attendance meeting.
- Collate attendance figures for both internal and external purposes.

- Report concerns about attendance to the vice principal inclusion and principal.
- Advise the vice principal inclusion if staff are not meeting their attendance responsibilities.

8.3 **Oak staff**

- Record attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submit this information on SIMS within the given timescale.
- Inform the appropriate head of year/ family liaison officer if they are concerned about any 'patterns' of absence.
- Staff to contact home if student truants a lesson.

8.4 **Tutors**

- Encourage positive attendance in daily tutor times.
- Welcome students back on their return.
- Respond to the N code list provided by the family liaison officer and provide a return at the specified time weekly.
- Mentor letter 1 students as directed by the appropriate family liaison officer.
- Inform their head of year/ family liaison officer if they are concerned about any 'patterns' of absence.

8.5 **Heads of Year**

- The heads of year are expected to have weekly meetings with their allocated family liaison officer to discuss strategies for improvement within their year group.
- Relay attendance information to their teams in their weekly update, with actions.
- Support the family liaison officer in ensuring that their tutors are completing Letter 1 mentoring and removing all N codes.
- Mentor identified students to improve their attendance.
- Meeting parent/carers referred to by their family liaison officer.
- Communicate with staff if students are expected to be absent for more than a few days.
- Ensure work is sent home if a student has a long-term medical issue.
- Provide a positive re-integration for those students who have been absent for a length of time.

8.6 **The Vice Principal Inclusion**

- The vice principal inclusion is responsible for ensuring the policy is implemented consistently across the academy.
- The vice principal supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual student and issues fixed term notices, where necessary.

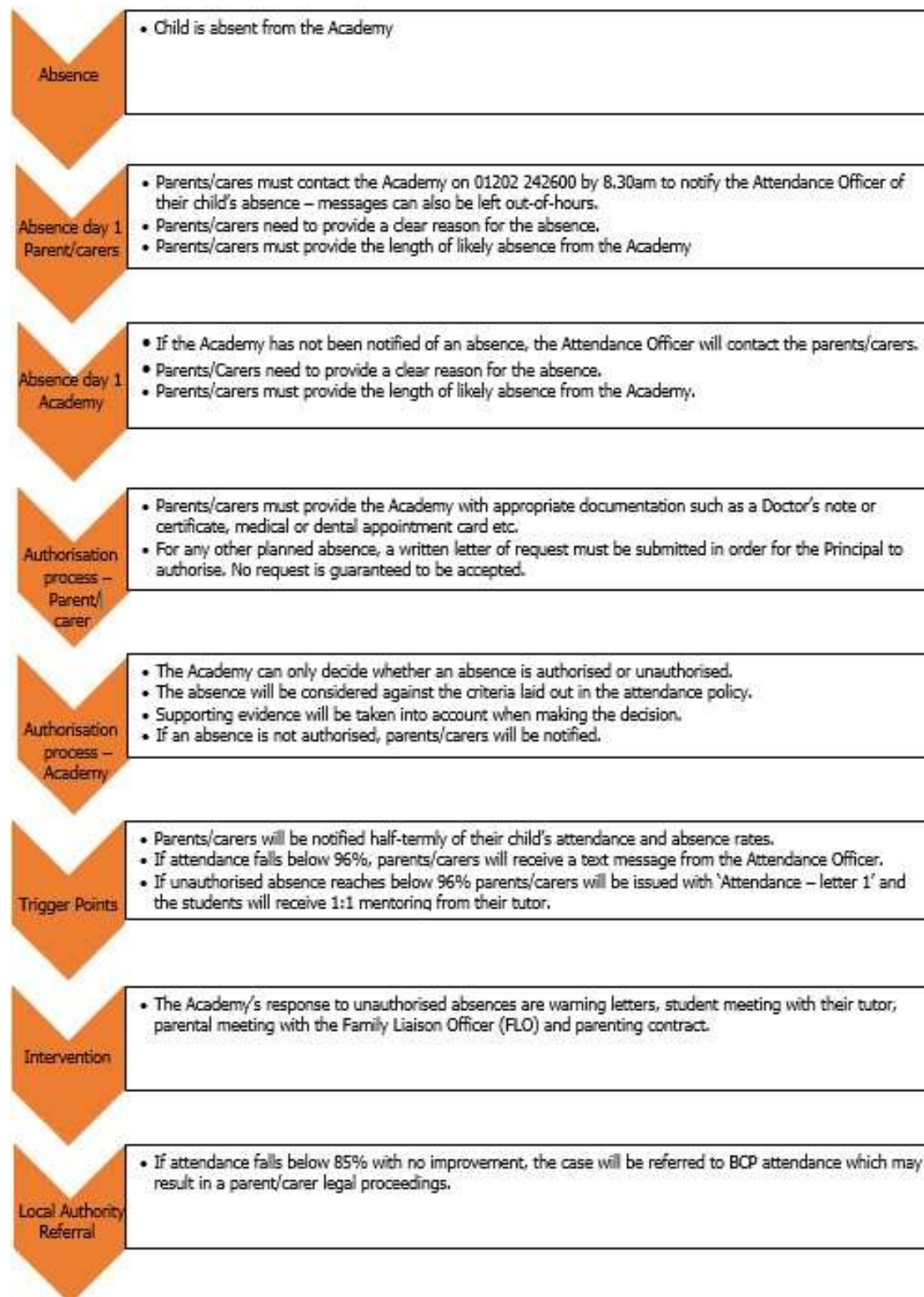
9. **Summary**

- 9.1 Regular school attendance is an important part of giving children the best possible start in life. The aim should be to attend 100% of the time. Students who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work and do less well in exams. Good attendance also shows potential employers that a young person is reliable.

Appendix 1 – Attendance Procedures

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES	
Issue	Action
Information sharing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) MEV will update attendance tracker on Friday morning with attendance report. 2) MEV will email O code report on Mondays to KAT. 3) Tutors will follow up O codes when student returns to school and update MEV. 4) FLO to advise HOY of the lowest 5 in year group.
Attendance roles	
Preparation for the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLO/MEV to update Attendance Intervention Overview with actions required/taken.
Pupils at 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MEV to send text congratulating students.
Pupils between 94% and 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text sent to advising parents of their child's attendance percentage.
Pupils between 93% and 96%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLO to meet with HOY to discuss actions to be taken where a student has failed to show any improvement in attendance. • Letter 1 to be sent. This advises parent of their child's attendance percentage and offers the opportunity to discuss any issues regarding attendance with the FLO. • Tutors to have 1:1 mentoring session with tutees who have received Letter 1. • MEV to record on Attendance Intervention Overview. • Monitor over a two-week period.
Pupils between 90% and 92%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text to be sent for any students that have failed to improve attendance after receiving Letter 1. • Monitor over a two-week period.
Pupils below 90%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FLO to meet with HOY to discuss further actions. • If no improvement Letter 2 to be sent inviting parent/carers in for a meeting. This letter invites parents to an attendance review with the FLO to discuss how to support and improve attendance. • A letter warning of possible prosecution is sent if attendance fails to improve. • HOY/FLO to meet with parent/carers to complete Parenting Contract
Pupils below 88%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there has been no improvement in attendance. • FLO to discuss with EBI/HOY further actions. • KAT to issue Penalty Warning letter. • HOY to monitor lowest 5 students over a two-week period.
Punctuality	
Attendance and Punctuality Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For pupils who are late more than twice a week and for those whose attendance is below 95%
Cumulative U codes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late letter to be sent. Possible Fixed term penalty Notice.
Cumulative late marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Late Letter to be sent. Break/after school detention

Appendix 2 – Absence Flow Chart



Appendix 2 – Absence for Vulnerable Students

For students identified as CP/CIN/CIC or in any other way identified as vulnerable and highlighted on the academy's register as such, the process for managing an absence of up to five days is set out as below. For all other students the usual process of communicating and following up on absence should be undertaken.

Ultimate responsibility for the improvement of absence for students who are vulnerable rests with the SLT member accountable for attendance.

Daily, the SLT lead will need to have an updated overview of which vulnerable students are absent as they are accountable for reviewing decisions taken by the pastoral team. Copies of this overview should also be sent to the DSL and the relevant HOY.

Home Visits should be recorded WITH DETAIL to explain EXACTLY what the outcome of the visit/TEAMS meeting has been. This should be set up within the pastoral TEAM of the academy and reviewed by the SLT Lead every day.

Day	Action required follow absence on each day for pupils who are vulnerable	Responsible
1	Home Visit or TEAMS call to ensure that sight of student is recorded. Allocated social worker informed.	AO/FLO
2	Home Visit or TEAMS call to ensure that sight of student is recorded. Allocated social worker informed.	AO/FLO
3	Home visit or TEAMS call to ensure that sight of student is recorded. Allocated social worker informed. Review of criteria (below) to confirm whether referral to Social Care is required.	AO/FLO DSL
4	Home visit or TEAMS call to ensure that sight of student is recorded. Allocated social worker informed.	AO/FLO
5	Meeting booked with parent and student to review barriers to attendance and confirm an updated Inclusion support plan.	HOY
6-10	If absence continues despite meeting on day 5, the above procedure should be repeated and the student logged with the LA as a child missing education on day 10.	AO/FLO
EVERY MONDAY, ALL students identified as vulnerable should be updated in consultation between SLT Lead and DSL.		

Definition of Children Missing Education

For the purpose of the Statutory Guidance on Children Missing Education, children missing education are defined as those who are not on a school roll or receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Those who are regularly absent or have missed 10 school days or more without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'. Consequently, the policy of the academy for any student who has not attended their school for a period of ten days without permission may be at risk of becoming 'children missing education'.

In the following circumstances a referral to children's social care and /or the police should always be made promptly:

- The child may be the victim of a crime;
- The child is subject of a Child Protection plan;
- The child is subject of s47 enquiries;
- The child is in care.
- There is a known person posing a risk to children in the household or in contact with the household;
- There is a history of the family moving frequently;

The answers to further questions could assist a judgement whether or not to inform LA children's social care and the police and be useful in ascertaining prioritising home visits:

- In which age range is the child?
- Is this very sudden and unexpected behaviour?
- Have there been any past concerns about the child associating with significantly older young people or adults?
- Was there any significant incident prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Has the child been a victim of bullying?
- Are there health reasons to believe that the child is at risk?
- Does the child need essential medication or health care?
- Was the child noted to be depressed prior to the child's unexplained absence?
- Are there religious or cultural reasons to believe that the child is at risk?
- Rites of passage or forced marriage planned for the child?
- Has the child got a disability and/or special educational needs?
- Have there been past concerns about this child and family which together with the sudden disappearance are worrying?
- Is there any known history of drug or alcohol dependency within the family?
- Is there any known history of domestic violence?
- Is there concern about the parent/carer's ability to protect the child from harm?
- The length of time that a child remains out of school could, of itself, be an alerting factor of risk of harm to the child. Accordingly, if a situation is not resolved within 3 days then referrals should be made to the LA children's social care.

Reasonable enquiry

If the judgement reached on day one is that there is no reason to believe that the child is suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm, then the school may delay making a referral. The process of 'reasonable enquiry' has not been identified in regulations, however this includes school staff checking with all members of staff whom the child may have had contact with, and with the pupil's friends and their parents, siblings and known relatives at this school and others.

School staff should also make telephone calls to any numbers held on record or identified, sending a letter to the last known address, home visits by some school-based staff and consultation with local authority staff.