



Attendance policy

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Policy Version Control

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Responsible committee	
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Ormiston Academies Trust

Attendance policy

Policy Version Control

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Policy prepared by (name and department)	Victoria Taylor – Ormiston Governance Department
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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 pupils achieve their full potential. We recognise that this aim is not possible if they do not regularly attend the academy, or are persistently late.

Pupils are expected to attend the academy every day. It is the responsibility of parents/carers 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 will make every effort to implement appropriate support parents and pupils in this.

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

We are committed to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence
- Ensure every pupil 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.

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 Academy Attendance Leader 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

Principal		Jean Watt
Contact Details	Email	jean.watt@ormistonmeadows.co.uk
	Telephone	01733 231008
Attendance, Behaviour and Family Liaison Officer		Clare French
Contact Details	Email	clare.french@ormistonmeadows.co.uk
	Telephone	01733 231008

3. Key principles

The academy will keep an admission register and attendance register. The contents of which includes all pupils, 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 pupil attendance using the national codes. Pupils 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 **08.55am**. All pupils should be in their classroom at this time. Registers are marked by **08.55am**. Pupils arriving after this time will receive a late mark if they attend after this time. The register closes at **09.10am**. Attendance after the start of the registration session will attract a late mark, but will be recorded as an unauthorized late, which will constitute an absent mark for the particular session if arrival is after the registers have closed eg.09.10am.

During the afternoon session, the registration session commences at **1.00pm**, with the registers closing at **1.10pm**, the same marks will be recorded ie late mark if arriving before **1.10pm** and an unauthorized late being recorded if arriving after 1.10pm.

Pupils should be ready to enter the academy at 08.45am, with entry into their respective classrooms following promptly. This time allows all pupils to enter the academy site and arrive via their classroom prior to 08.55am, therefore avoiding any late marks being recorded. If a pupil shows a regular pattern of lates, ie three or more over a given period, a meeting will be requested in the first instance to discuss if any support is required. If there is a regular pattern of unauthorized lates (absences) the Academy Attendance Lead will take further action under the Academy Attendance Protocols as appropriate.

3.1 Definitions

A pupil 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 received prior notification and upon return the pupil has produced documentary evidence (as and when required under the Academy Attendance Protocols)
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during the academy day for which the academy has granted leave (upon production of documentary proof of appointment attendance)
- Religious or cultural observances for which the academy has granted leave (subject to term time request form being completed)
- An absence due to a family emergency, ie for exceptional circumstances that lead the absence to be unavoidable.

An **unauthorised absence** is defined as:

- Parents keeping children from attending the academy unnecessarily or without reason
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at the academy after the register has closed
- Day trips and holidays in term time
- Leaving the academy for no reason during the day – truancy

A Persistent Absentee is the Government's definition of a pupil who has a poor level of attendance, = 90% or below at any time over the academic year. The absences can be either unauthorized or authorized.

3.2 Academy Attendance Procedures

Parents are requested to notify the academy on the first morning of the child's absence by telephoning the main office **absence line tel: 01733 231008** to advise that their child is absent and the reason why. In line with safeguarding procedures it is requested that a call is made at the start of each day of absence.

The academy will operate a First Day Contact; if pupils are absent without notification parents will be contacted and asked for the reason for absence. After a period of absence Parent/carers are requested to confirm the reason for the absence in the form of a written note.

How the academy will deal with concerns relating to poor attendance

- This academy has an Academy Attendance Leader who has responsibility for all issues relating to the attendance of pupils on roll of the academy in support of the Principal. Their role also encompasses the responsibility for assisting parents and pupils in the removal of any barriers preventing regular attendance.
- Academy staff will work with pupils, parents and other agencies to resolve academy related issues which are impacting on a pupil's attendance. In the first instance of low attendance being identified, currently any pupil having attendance of 95% or below, the Parent/Carer will be informed by letter. If there continues to be a decline in the attendance, the Parent/Carer will be requested to attend a meeting in the academy to discuss the issues.
- This academy adheres to the LA's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct and Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 in the use of Penalty Notices for persistent absence. Penalty Notices are an alternative to prosecution under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 enabling parents to discharge potential liability for the offence of non-attendance at school by paying a penalty within an allotted time frame. Failure to pay the penalty on time will result in the LA either prosecuting for the original offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 or withdrawing the notice if it is proven that it contains material errors or was issued incorrectly.
- Penalty Notices will be used for persistent absence throughout the academy where 10 sessions or more of absence are recorded as unauthorised. The use of Penalty Notices will be considered and used for identified groups of pupils who are either causing concern or are at a significant time within their education, in addition to be used to deter planned term time absence. In line with the Peterborough City Council Penalty Notice Protocol, this academy will request the issue of Penalty Notices to parents/carers of pupils who fail to show a significant improvement in the attendance once it has been brought to the attention of the parent/carer. The issue of the PN is an alternative to initiating legal proceedings within a Magistrates Court. It provides the parent with the opportunity to acknowledge the offence of failing to ensure their child regularly attends the academy by payment of a fine i.e. £60 per child per parent/carer, raising after 21 days of non-payment to £120 per child per parent/carer thus discharging their liability.
- The use of Local Authority Penalty Notices has been adopted by this academy. Penalty Notices will therefore be used as a deterrent to continued unauthorised absences and in respect of unauthorised absences due to requests for a period of absence not deemed to meet exceptional circumstances/unavoidable incident.
- If, after academy based initiatives, the level of attendance continues to be of concern Parents/carers will be requested to attend a meeting with the Academy Attendance Lead. It is hoped that during this meeting an action plan to prevent any further decline in the attendance will be agreed by all.
It is worthy of note that OMA will attempt to work with all pupils and families in order to avoid prosecution. This academy works with Peterborough City Council Legal Services in respect of the instigation of any legal

proceedings against Parent/Carers, relating to non- school attendance should it be deemed appropriate. The academy has a duty to prevent any pupil's attendance falling into the criteria of Persistent Absentee (PA), having 90% or less attendance at any time over the academic year.

- The academy will support the re-integration of pupils sensitively after any lengthy period of absence and involve all appropriate staff, giving access to counselling or mentoring services as appropriate.

3.3 Term Time Leave of Absence

This academy actively discourages any absence taken during term time. It is considered that every pupil should attend all sessions regularly and punctually in order to avoid disruption and maximise their educational achievement. Parents/carers are required to complete a term time absence application for any planned leave over the term time. Application forms can be obtained from the Academy main office.

In pursuance of the change in legislation Sep 2013, this academy will assess each application on its individual merits. Only in **exceptional circumstances, being an unavoidable incident** may the academy agree to authorise a period of absence during term time. It is worthy of note that any request for the purpose of a holiday during term time will **not** be deemed as exceptional circumstances and therefore not authorised.

3.4 Rewards

The academy acknowledges 100% attendance in the following ways:

- Opportunity for the pupil to receive a weekly raffle ticket enabling numerous entries into an end of term Toy Hamper
- Awarding of attendance prizes at class level
- Recognition of great attendance at significant assemblies
- Opportunity to reach their potential by having great attendance to their lessons

It is hoped that by following this policy the academy will work in partnership with parents/carers, pupils and external agencies to support and promote maximum attendance as a priority.

Annexes

- A. Term time absence request form.

Annex A

TERM TIME ABSENCE REQUEST- 2016/17

Ormiston Meadows Academy wishes to encourage all pupils to attend regularly in order that they are able to access the full curriculum offered and therefore all achieve their potential. In line with the academy attendance policy we adhere to the LA Penalty Notice protocol as a tool to discourage the removal of any pupil from the Academy during term time. Please note:

- **A REQUEST SHOULD BE COMPLETED A MINIMUM OF 4 WEEKS BEFORE THE REQUIRED DATE AND SHOULD INCLUDE DETAILS OF ANY OTHER SIBLINGS.**
- **THE REASON FOR THE REQUEST IS DUE TO EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES/UNAVOIDABLE CAUSES ONLY; PLEASE NOTE FAMILY HOLIDAYS AND WEDDINGS, BIRTHDAYS ETC DO NOT CONSTITUTE EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES.**
- Parents do **NOT** have any right for their child to have a leave of absence authorised during the term. If the request is unauthorised and is five consecutive school days or more, a request will be made to the LA for a Penalty Notice to be issued. This is a fine of a minimum of **£60 per child per parent/carer, which if unpaid after 21 days rises to £120 per child per parent/carer.**
- Parent/carer(s) are responsible for ensuring the academy is made aware of the reasons for all planned absences via this form.
- Parents/carer(s) should also note that if the request is authorised due to it being for **exceptional circumstances**, failure to travel and return on the expected dates, incurring additional absences will cause the period to be unauthorised which may also result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

We/I request that my child (full names): _____ DoB: _____
 Year Group _____ be granted a period of authorised absence,

From (date): _____ To (date): _____ inclusive. Total school days _____

For the following purpose:

***YOU MAY ATTACH A SUPPORTING LETTER**

Other children in the family are:

Name	Age/yr Group	School	Please note you are required to complete an individual application to each school.

We/I understand that a Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority if the request is denied and my child(ren) is/are absent during this period, I also understand failure of my child to travel/return on the expected dates incurring additional absences may also result in a Penalty Notice being issued.

Both parents/carers of pupil are required to sign, detailing full names please.

Signed Parent/carer (printed in full, first & surname).....Date.....

Signed Parent/carer (printed in full, first & surname).....Date.....

Date Form Received in

Academy.....
 Authorised.....Unauthorised.....

Signed..... Principal; Jean Watt Dated.....

A decision/warning letter will be sent to the Parent(s)/carers. Dated.....