



Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust

Attendance Policy

Issue Status: -

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Signature

Name

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Chair of Trustees

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

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1. OVERVIEW

If learners are to get the greatest benefit from their education in school, it is important that they have good attendance and arrive punctually. As learners grow and prepare for their next stages of education and employment they need to see good attendance and punctuality as important qualities that are valued by others and employers. At Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust, we will do all that we can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Where learners are not conforming to our high expectations for attendance and punctuality we will put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure that all learners attend school well.
2. To ensure that all learners are punctual.
3. To win the support of parents in ensuring that their children attend school well and that they arrive on time.
4. To keep good records of attendance through the school registers and to take prompt action to follow up absences.
5. To investigate and act immediately where truancy is suspected or confirmed.
6. To work effectively with the LA and other agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and efficiently.
7. To monitor closely pupils with attendance and punctuality issues and to work with parents and where appropriate other agencies to bring about improvement.

3. ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

1. All teachers will complete a register in the classroom. Any children who arrive after the school closes its registers will be classed as absent. Registers close at 9.30am.
2. Any child who is late must be signed in via the late register in the main entrance, and a reason must be given for the late arrival.
3. All parents whose child is not in school, or who have an appointment etc so their child may be late, must telephone the school office to inform the school of the reason for absence.
4. The school attendance clerk/officer will telephone any parent or carer who has not informed the school of an absence early in the morning once the registers have closed.

If a parent cannot be contacted, the attendance clerk/officer will inform the Headteacher, and a decision may be taken to inform the Education Social Welfare Officer (ESWO) if it is felt that there are concerns for the child's welfare, or that the family have a regular pattern of non-attendance at school.

4. STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE AND TACKLING NON-ATTENDANCE

The following is a list of possible strategies employed in our academies:

1. All staff will draw to the headteacher's attention any absences that are cause for concern or suspicion.
2. Positive attendance activities may be introduced as and when required, such as attendance prizes, certificates and punctuality weeks to promote good attendance and punctuality.
3. Learners arriving late will be reported to the headteacher and the attendance clerk/officer, who will keep a record of the times and occasions that a learner is late.
4. Where a learner is developing a pattern of 'occasional' absences the parent will be contacted to discuss the pattern of absences.
5. The school may hold regular meetings between the ESWO, attendance clerk/officer and headteacher to monitor absence records and meet with families to support them in getting their children to attend school regularly.
6. Where necessary the school will work closely with the LA to take action against those unlawfully keeping learners from school.
8. The headteacher and Trust CEO will monitor attendance on a regular basis, and follow-up any concerns.
9. The Trust and its academies follow the LA and national policy which states that no term time holidays are to be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances.
10. The CEO will report to Trustees termly on attendance levels.

5. KEY INFORMATION

The Government changed the definition of persistent absence in September 2015 to below 90% attendance. Poor attendance could lead to prosecution through the magistrates' courts. The maximum fine is £2500 and/or 3 months in prison or the issuing of a fixed penalty notice. Each school will liaise with their ESWO over any issues which may lead to prosecution or a fine.

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised and Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school, even with the support of a parent.

6. HOLIDAYS

As per DFE guidelines, the Trust and its' schools do not authorise term-time holidays, **unless in exceptional circumstances**. Holidays taken in term-time may, dependent on previous and current levels of attendance, lead to referral to the Local Authority. The Local Authority may send a warning letter **or** issue a fixed-penalty notice of £60 per parent per child dependent on the circumstances and attendance record.

Exceptional Circumstances under which absences during term time may be authorised are:

- A factory shutdown
- Parent serving in the Armed Forces or
- Terminal illness of the child or immediate family member

Other factors will be considered by the headteacher.

Parents wishing to apply for their child to be absent during term time must complete a 'Request for Absence Form'.

7. OUTCOMES

The Trust and its' academies will do all it can to ensure that learners come happily, willingly and punctually to school to ensure that all gain the greatest possible value from their education.

8. MONITORING

The individual academy attendance data will be monitored by the Local Governing Body, whilst the Trust Board will regularly monitor MAT attendance and may take action when attendance at an academy is deemed a concern.

9. COMPLAINTS

All complaints should follow the Trust complaints policy found on the Trust website.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCE REQUEST FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

APPLICATION BY PARENT/CARER

If you wish to take your child out of school in term time and think that you have exceptional circumstances, please complete this form and return to the School Office at least 14 days before the date you wish to remove your child from school.

Pupil's Name: _____ Class: _____

Address: _____

Parent/Carer Name (s) _____

First day of absence: _____ Date of return to school: _____

Total number of days missed: _____

Reason for absence: _____

I understand that parents or carers do not have an automatic right to leave of absence. If the absence request is unauthorised and my child's attendance falls below 90% the Education Welfare Services will be notified of the absence taken and a Penalty Notice may be issued. I understand that a Penalty is issued to the parent/carers of each child taken out of school and that this fine is £60 which is increased to £120 if not paid within the first 28 days.

Signed: _____ Dated: _____

(Please ensure you give at least 14 days' notice of the proposed absence)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

RESPONSE TO THE REQUEST FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

☐ **AUTHORISED:** Your request has been authorised for the following dates:

____/____/____ to ____/____/____

☐ **UNAUTHORISED:** Your request for a leave of absence during term time has not been authorised.

Signed: _____ Date: _____