Attendance and Punctuality Policy

September 2021

Introduction

This policy applies to all students at Oasis Academy Clarksfield and will be used to inform attendance practice within the school.

Key benchmarks

- Attendance percentage
- Overall absence percentage
- Persistent absence (PA) percentage (90% or below is persistent)

During the covid pandemic school and academies are advised by the DFE (Department for Education) to use specific codes in the register if a child is absent due to covid related absences.

Legal Duties

By law, all students of compulsory school age (5 to 16) must receive a suitable full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to make sure this happens - either by registering their child at a school or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. As a last resort, schools in collaboration with the local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance. Oasis Academy Clarksfield seeks to operate in ways which maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

Oasis Academy Clarksfield fulfils its responsibilities in respect of taking a morning and afternoon session registration, of being open for the required 190 student school days unless prevented by extreme weather or other unforeseen exceptional circumstance, and by using the nationally recognised attendance codes.

Key principles

- Children at have the right to the best possible education**.**
- Children cannot learn in school if they aren't here, we want children to achieve their potential.
- Attendance is everyone's business.
- Teachers should ask both children and parents about absence and attendance should be discussed at parent consultations.
- There is always a reason for poor attendance, we must listen to children and families, identify the problem/barrier, and then support them to overcome the issue.

Context

Oasis Academy Clarksfield endeavours to provide a safe learning environment in which students can feel and be safe, enjoy and achieve. We acknowledge the proven correlation between high level attendance and student outcomes. Our attendance policy emphasises positive strategies and a range of interventions to promote good attendance. When normal school procedures do not result in good attendance, a range of further measures which includes legal action will be considered.

Aims of the policy

- To increase overall school attendance
- To raise the profile of the importance of good attendance
- To set out how we monitor attendance and punctuality
- To set out how we will support children and families to improve attendance
- To decrease levels of lateness
- To set out the legal processes for persistent lateness and absence
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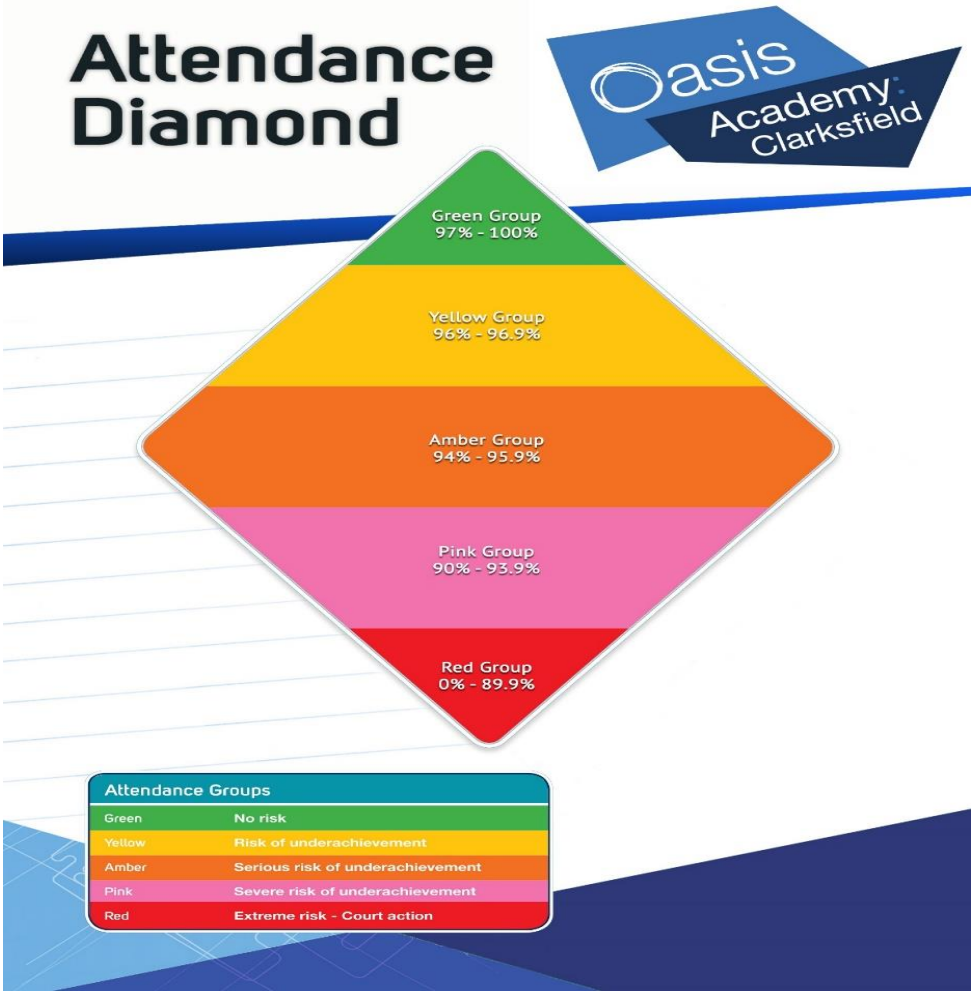
Attendance practice – including rewards and support for families

Attendance practice is led by Mrs Cassin – attendance officer and Miss Beswick - attendance support. They work together to monitor and improve attendance at individual and whole school level.

The diagram below highlights the whole academy approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. The attendance of children in the red, pink or amber groups and those whose attendance is falling will be monitored and if needed, meetings with parents will be arranged. The School Attendance Team at Oldham Council may also be involved with issuing penalties and if needed, prosecution for court. Actions to support improvement will be agreed, delegated, and recorded.



Positive reinforcement

To promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, Oasis Academy Clarksfield uses a range of rewards:

- Celebration of class attendance in Celebration Assembly. The three classes with the highest attendance will receive gold, silver, bronze certificate or 100% attendance to be displayed on classroom door.

- Stars in a jar – weekly prize draw for pupils who have 100% attendance. Pupil's name pulled out of their class jar weekly in celebration assembly and will receive a small prize.
- Pupil's with 100% attendance will receive a certificate every half term.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

If a pupil is absent from Oasis Academy Clarksfield, it is vital that their parent let school know as soon as possible to give a reason either over the telephone (0161 213 1235), via school email (clarksfield.admin@oasisclarksfield.org) or in person at the office.

Absences can only be authorised where there is good cause. If a sufficient reason for absence is not provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. All absences could result in a home visit from the School Safeguarding Team. If a pupil's attendance is a concern, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence to authorise an absence.

Unauthorised absences may result in a penalty from Oldham Council attendance service (£60 per parent per school aged child). Oldham council will prosecute parents in court, if needed.

Lateness

It is Oasis Academy Clarksfield's responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if children attend regularly and on time. We expect all children to arrive at school registrations on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A child arriving late disrupts learning. A build-up of lateness or unacceptable patterns of lateness over a period will result in further follow up investigation and action. This will include Penalty Notices from Oldham Council attendance team. Late letters will be sent out to parents explain the impact arriving late has on their child and the whole class and if it continues class teachers should invite parents into school for a meeting.

Any family experiencing difficulties which are impacting on attendance/punctuality need to speak to a member of the Attendance/ Safeguarding team for support.

Collection of children at home time

1. We ask all parents to make sure their child is collected on time by an adult at the end of the school day at 3.10pm. Children can get upset if they are not collected on time. If your child is not collected by 3.25pm we will try and make contact with you. The child will wait at the main office. If we cannot make contact, we will telephone other authorised adults that you have given us details for. If we cannot make contact within 1 hour, we will contact Social Care or the Police.
2. To help us keep your child safe, please tell your child's teacher if someone other than you or the usual person is going to collect your child at the end of the day.
3. Only adults over 18 years old can collect children at home time.

Appointments during term time

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents should avoid making routine appointments for children during the academy day or taking family holidays during the term time period.

1. If a child has an appointment, parents need to tell the teacher or the office in advance and bring in proof.
2. If the appointment is in the morning the child should come to school and get their register mark first and return to school after the appointment.

If they do not return for the afternoon session, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Unauthorised absences may result in a penalty from Oldham Council attendance service (£60 per parent per school aged child). Oldham council will prosecute parents in court, if needed.

Extended leave/ Holidays will <u>not</u> be authorised during term time and will result in a fixed penalty notice.

If children are being taken out of school for extend leave then parents must complete a leave of absence form from the office and return to school.

If parents fail to inform the school that they are taking a holiday a home visit will be made and a letter will be posted to the home address and emergency contacts will be contacted. School has a duty of care to safeguard the children, so it is important school know where the children are.

Parents are at risk of being issued a penalty from Oldham Council for the unauthorised absences (£60 per parent, per school aged child). Oldham Council may also prosecute parents in court for non-attendance.

Pupils are at risk of being removed off the register, if they are absent for 20 school days. If a pupil is removed off the register, parents will have to apply online via Oldham Council for a new school place once they return from extended leave.

The academy will complete a Missing Pupil Form and will return it to the local authority if the academy is unable to locate the pupil/family.

Legal action

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends on a regular and punctual basis. Should any child's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be referred to the Oasis Academy Clarksfield team. Where necessary, Oasis Academy Clarksfield will recommend legal action working in partnership with the Local Authority. If 20% of the total absence figure is unauthorised this means that legal proceedings can be started.

Legal action includes:

- Penalty Notice: A penalty notice will be issued for each child and each parent who has unauthorised absence. 5 days (10 sessions) or more or lateness. A Penalty Notice is £60 per parent, per school aged child. If the penalty is not paid in full within a 28 day period, the penalty will double (£120 per parent, per school aged child). If the penalty is not paid after 28 days then the local authority will begin legal proceedings.

- Prosecution for unauthorised absence: It is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act to fail to secure regular attendance of a registered pupil at Oasis Academy Clarksfield. Magistrates can issue fines of up to £2,500 per child, impose Parenting Orders and impose a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

Supporting and working with parents

In order to support parents in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual child attendance, we aim to actively involve families on attendance issues. This includes:

- Active involvement by teaching staff e.g., parent consultations, Newsletters, updates on school website
- Unexplained/unaccounted for absence telephone call or home visit asking for reasons
- Pupils are monitored via an attendance tracker.
- Warning letters sent out with regards to unauthorised attendance and the legal implications
- Parental meetings to discuss barriers to attendance and possible solutions

Responsibilities

The school will:

- Approve the policy and any proposed changes
- Receive reports from the principal
- Review the working of the policy in the light of the principal's report

- Ensure that the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the school, and is known by the parents

The principal will:

- Set attendance targets as part of the School Development Plan and target-setting process
- Monitor progress – weekly attendance meetings and half termly reports
- Ensure that strategies are in place to promote and implement the policy throughout the school
- Determine (in collaboration with relevant senior staff) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the school's official form, or absences which have taken place for which no request was made
- Notify parents as appropriate that if a child of compulsory academy age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence
- Initiate with appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance
- Liaise with the appropriate bodies (including the Local Authority's agencies) where appropriate

The Safeguarding Officer (Mrs Cassin) will

- Work with all attendance staff to ensure the efficient running of the system
- Make periodic checks of the registers to monitor child absence and arrange register audits with the Local Authority
- Deal with issues of inadequate registering
- Ensure that unaccounted-for absences are followed up by getting in touch with Parents/carers (if there is reasonable concern about a child's welfare) and that all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with
- Make regular checks that proof of illness are being provided
- Contact parents over student absence patterns where appropriate
- Make home visits where appropriate to deal with attendance and child protection concerns
- Arrange appropriate training for staff
- Keep the Principal informed of the progress of the policy
- Advise the Principal on any strategies that could be initiated or improved
- Communicate with offsite providers with regard to attendance
- Monitor new starters to school.

Attendance Officer with responsibility for Attendance will**:**

- Reward Good Attendance – weekly prize draw if a pupil has been in school all week, certificates for pupils with 100% attendance.
- Input / check daily attendance figures
- Provide weekly attendance report
- Make all staff aware when a child is a persistent absentee
- Complete half termly attendance reports and statistics
- Liaise with the Safeguarding Officer (Mrs Cassin) over training needs
- Alert the Safeguarding officer to patterns of whole school absence and truancy
- Statutory Action
    1. Contact to be made with parents on first day absence..
    2. Register late arrivals and take them to class (support from office team)

3. After lates & exclusions completed – pull off absence report
4. Home Visit
5. Phone call home
6. Depending on outcome of phone call - home visit
7. Reason for absence recorded on Brom Com system
8. Statutory action

Staff/Class Teachers will:

- Praise good attendance
- Monitor and support the attendance of all children
- Ensure that children are registered accurately and efficiently
- Identify patterns of absence which may be significant
- Ensure that Brom Com programme is not left on screen after the register is closed
- Families need to give reasons for absence.
- Discuss non-attendance and lateness with parents' day to day and log this on Brom Com, including informing the Safeguarding Officer of any possible underlying problems
- Display attendance certificates for the class on classroom door.
- Keep the Safeguarding Lead (DSL) formed of any signs of suspected truancy
- Talk with the ALT/ Safeguarding Lead/Attendance officer if they think a child might need to go home or their family needs to be contacted e.g. illness, injury, behaviour incident
- Ensure children are collected by family members aged 18 years or older or authorised adults unless permission has been given for children to go home on their own (Y6 only)

Parents are required to:

- Ensure their children attends regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence ('Attending regularly' means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session)
- Inform the school of their child's absence on the first day of non-attendance **before 9am**
- Provide medical evidence if absent for 3 days or more with illness
- Not remove children before the end of the school day without medical evidence
- Not take holidays in term time
- Inform office staff before 12pm if someone other than person(s) on the schools contact list will pick child up (must be aged 18 years or older)

Students at statutory school age are required to:

- Attend regularly unless they are ill or have an authorised absence

Students of non-statutory school age are required to:

- There is an expectation that if a child of non-statutory school age has a place in the school nursery, they must attend regularly. Failure to attend could result in the school place being withdrawn.

Taking the Register

Registration is carried out at the beginning and end of each day, using the Electronic Register on Brom Com. Registers are marked using a set code so that reasons for absence can be quickly established. All registers will be closed ten minutes after the start of the morning and afternoon session. A high standard of marking is regarded as essential. Staff are given updated instructions on the marking of registers as required.

Students of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this school to register ALL children every session (including those not of compulsory Academy age). The register must record whether the student is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

Codes to use:

- **N**- Teacher to use this mark if the child is absent, this should be changed by staff, Mrs Cassin, attendance officer and Miss Beswick, attendance support to **'I'** if there is medical proof for the absence. If proof is not received and the child has a history of poor attendance, parents may be asked to provide medical evidence. If medical is not provided when requested, then the mark will be recorded as **'O'- Unauthorised**. Parents are at risk of being issued a penalty from Oldham Council for the unauthorised absences (£60 per parent, per school aged child). Oldham Council may also prosecute parents in court for non- attendance
- **E**- exclusions – Recorded by principal
- **C**- parent agreed restricted timetable (must be reviewed frequently)
- An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:

Following codes to be applied by Attendance officer

- One taking place off the school premises
- Approved by a person authorised by the principal
- Supervised by a person approved by the principal
- Of an educational nature, including field trips and educational visits

Comments for any absence must be put on Brom Com system next to the child's name as a red flag comment.

Policy to be reviewed September 2022.

Important Safeguarding and Attendance Information for all Parents & Carers

English - This letter contains important information regarding your child's attendance in school. If you are unable to read or understand it, it is within your interests to seek help and translation, as failure to act upon this information could lead to prosecution.

Romanian - Această scrisoare conține informații importante cu privire la prezența copilului dumneavoastră la școală. Dacă nu puteți să o citiți sau să o înțelegeți, este în interesul dumneavoastră să solicitați ajutor și traducere, deoarece neacordarea acestor informații ar putea duce la urmărirea penală

Urdu - اس خط میں آپ کے بچے کی اسکول میں حاضری سے متعلق اہم معلومات ہیں۔ اگر آپ اسے پڑھنے یا سمجھنے سے قاصر ہیں تو ، مدد اور ترجمے تلاش کرنا آپ کے مفادات میں ہے ، کیونکہ اس معلومات پر عمل نہ کرنے میں ناکامی سے استغاثہ کا سبب بن سکتا ہے۔

Panjabi - Isa patara vica tuhāḍē bacē dī sakūla vica hāzarī sabadhī mahatavapūraṇa jāṇakārī hai. Jē tusīṁ isa nū paṛhana jāṁ samajhaṇa vica asamaratha hō, tāṁ sahā'itā atē anuvāda dī maga karanā tuhāḍē hita vica hai, ki'uṅki isa jāṇakārī'tē amala karana vica asaphala rahiṇa nāla mukadamā calā'i'ā jā sakadā hai

Safeguarding

At Oasis Academy Clarksfield, we strive to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our children. We are committed to working in partnership with parents/carers to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. When concerned about the welfare of a child, we will always act in the interests of the child, and we have a responsibility to act. We have a legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries.

At Oasis Academy Clarksfield we are working hard to improve the attendance of all our children. It affects children's learning if they do not attend school daily, or they are late for school. We encourage you to make sure your child attends school on time and every day. Thank you to the families that are doing this already.

Attendance

If your child is unwell, we need you to contact school on the day before 9am. You can do this by telephoning the school on 0161 213 1235, via school email (clarksfield.admin@oasisclarksfield.org) or in person at the office. If we do not hear from you, we will contact you by telephone or by visiting your home.

Attendance is closely monitored and only the Principal/Attendance officer can authorise absence. If you or your child are having any problems that could affect coming to school on time and every day, please speak with a member of staff at reception. We need to tell you that any parent/carer whose child has unauthorised absence may be asked to provide medical evidence to authorise the absence. Unauthorised absences may result in a Penalty Notice from Oldham Local Authority (£60 per parent, per school aged child) or consider prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Other actions could also be taken, including a referral to Social Care.

Medical appointments

Please try and arrange medical appointments outside of school hours for your child.

If your child has a medical appointment, they must come to school first to get their mark in the register and then they must be collected by yourself. You must bring in proof of the appointment, for example, appointment card or letter. After an appointment you must bring your child back to school. If a child does not return, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised'. Please be aware that the

Local Authority monitor all unauthorised absences and where appropriate will issue penalty notices or consider prosecution in Court.

Extended leave/holidays in term time

Extended leave/holidays in term time are not authorised. Parents who take their children out of school or are planning to do so are warned that if they remove their child from the school during term time without authorisation, they will receive a penalty notice from Oldham Council. A penalty notice will be issued to each parent for each child. The Penalty Notice is a fine £60 per parent, per school aged child. The penalty notice will double if not paid within 28 days. Non-payment of penalties may result in prosecution in court.

If parents decide to take extended leave during term time, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence form from the office.

A penalty notice is applied for unauthorised absence equalling 10 sessions (5days) or more. Failure to pay a penalty notice will result in legal proceedings being taken.
Other statutory action may also be considered under the Education Act 1996, which may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court. If found guilty the parent will receive a criminal record and may receive a fine of up to £2500 and / or 3 months' imprisonment.
Your child/children may be at risk of being removed off the register at school if they are absent for 20 school days due to extended leave.

Late arrivals
It is important that your child is in the playground at 8.40am. The playground gates are locked promptly at 9am. If your child arrives after 9am, you must report to the main office and sign your child in using the electronic signing in system. You will also be asked to explain why your child has arrived late**.**
If your child arrives late on a regular basis, you will be invited into school to discuss your child's punctuality. Oldham Council attendance team will monitor your child's punctuality and late arrivals, this may result in a penalty notice from the council and/or prosecution in court.

Collection of children at home time

1. Only adults over 18 years old can collect children at home time.
2. Only adults on pupil's emergency contact on the computer can collect pupils. Please ensure the office have the correct contact details for the adults on the contact list.
3. To help us keep your child safe, please tell your child's teacher if someone other than you or the usual person is going to collect your child at the end of the day.

Late collection of children
We ask all parents to make sure their child is collected on time by an adult at the end of the school day 3.10pm Children can get upset if they are not collected on time. If your child is not collected by 3.25pm we will try and make contact. Children will be supervised in the main office, while waiting for parents to arrive. If we cannot make contact, we will telephone other authorised adults that you have given us details for. If we cannot make contact within 1 hour, we will contact Social Care or the Police.

Please ensure school always have up to date emergency contact numbers and addresses.

Thank you for your support.