



Attendance, Punctuality and Late Collection Child Policy

Introduction

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

Key benchmarks

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

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 Aspinal seeks to operate in ways which maximise student potential while supporting parents in meeting their legal requirements.

Oasis Academy Aspinal 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 Oasis Academy Aspinal have the right to the best possible education.
- Children can't 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 Aspinal 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 academy 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 Academy 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

Attendance practice – including rewards and support for families

Attendance practice is led by **Halys Hickman, Attendance Officer**. She works with her team to monitor and improve attendance at individual and whole academy level. The diagram below highlights the whole academy approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. The attendance statistics for every child at Aspinal will be sent to class teachers weekly by the Attendance Officer with responsibility for attendance for class display use. To support this process a weekly Safeguarding and Attendance meeting will be held as part of the whole staff Meeting on a Monday at 3.30pm. All children are monitored and banded in relation to their attendance percentage (see below). The attendance of children in the red, pink or amber groups and those whose attendance is falling will be reviewed. Actions to support improvement will be agreed, delegated and recorded.

The class teacher has responsibility for praising children in the gold balloon for their high attendance and encouraging and supporting improvement for children in the silver and bronze balloons.

Positive reinforcement

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

- Display of individual attendance in each class
- Celebration of class attendance in Friday Celebration Assembly – cakes for the classes above the school target of 97.5%.
- Prize draws to win a gift card (100% attendance and on time for the week Thursday to Thursday, two names drawn out in Friday Celebration Assembly)

Authorised and unauthorised absence

If a student is absent from Oasis Academy Aspinal it is vital that their parent lets school know as soon as possible to give a reason either over the telephone or in person at the reception.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no sufficient reason and evidence for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. All absences could result in a home visit from the Academy Safeguarding Team. PA will need to be evidenced by the parent by bringing in a medical note. Parents cannot authorise absence. This is a decision which rests with Oasis Academy Aspinal in accordance within the boundaries set by The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996.

Lateness

It is Oasis Academy Aspinal'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 of time will result in further follow up investigation and action. This will include Penalty Notices. 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 difficulty which are impacting on attendance/punctuality need to speak to a member of the Attendance/ Safeguarding team for support.

Late collection of children

1. We ask all parents to make sure their child is collected on time by an adult at the end of the school day 3.30pm Children can get upset if they are not collect on time. If your child is not collected by 3.45pm we will try and contact you. Child moved to after school club at 3.45 while waiting for parent 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. 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.

Holidays & 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. Teachers need to send the child to the office if they know that the child has an appointment.
3. If the appointment in the morning the child should come to school and get their mark first and return to school after the appointment.
4. If they don't return for the afternoon session, the absence should be recorded as unauthorised. A letter will be sent to the parent advising them that the absence has been recoded as unauthorised and kept in the child's file.

Holidays will not be authorised during term time and will result in a fixed penalty notice.

If parents fail to inform the academy that they are taking a holiday a home visit will be made and a letter will be left at the home address advising that evidence of illness or any other reason should be provided within 24 hours. If evidence is not given to the academy a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Legal action

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends Oasis Academy Aspinal on a regular and punctual basis. Should any child's attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be referred to the Oasis Academy Aspinal team. Where necessary, Oasis Academy Aspinal 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 a £120 fine. If this is paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, then the penalty drops to £60. If the penalty is not paid in full within a 28 day period, a prosecution will be sought.



- 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 Aspinal. 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, Classroom displays
- Unexplained/unaccounted for absence telephone call or home visit asking for reasons
- Automatic yellow warning letters for children with attendance below 97%
- Automatic red warning letters for children with attendance below 96%
- 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 Academy Council 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 Academy, and is known by the parents

The Principal will:

- Set attendance targets as part of the Academy 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 Academy
- Determine (in collaboration with relevant senior staff) whether to authorise any proposed absences requested on the Academy'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 Manager 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 the Academy.

Attendance Officer with responsibility for Attendance will:

- Reward Good Attendance – prize draw list, cakes, class displays
 - Input / check daily attendance figures
 - Provide weekly attendance report
 - Make all staff aware when a child is considered to be a persistent absentee
 - Complete half termly attendance reports and statistics
 - Liaise with the Safeguarding Manager over training needs
 - Alert the Safeguarding Manager to patterns of whole school absence and truancy
 - Statutory Action
1. Arrange for contact to be made with parents on first day absence with support from office staff.
 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 SIMS
 8. Statutory action

Academy 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 the SIMS programme is not left on screen after the register is closed
- Families need to give reasons for absence at the main office
- Discuss non-attendance and lateness with parents day to day and log this on SIMS, including informing the Safeguarding Manager of any possible underlying problems
- Keep their attendance display up to date
- Keep the Safeguarding Manager informed 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 eg, illness, injury, behaviour incident
- Ensure children are collected by family members 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 Academy of their child's absence on the first day of non-attendance **before 9am**
- Will provide medical evidence if absent for 3 days or more with illness
- Will not remove children before the end of the school day without 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

Students of 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 academy nursery, they must attend regularly. Failure to attend could result in the academy place being withdrawn.

Taking the Register

Registration is carried out at the beginning and end of each day, using the Electronic Register. 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 Academy age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this Academy 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 (Halys Hickman/Alison) to **'I'** if there is medical proof for the absence. If proof is not received and the child has a history of poor attendance then the mark will be recorded as **'O'- Unauthorised**. A letter should be sent to the parent/Carer advising them the absence is unauthorised and this letter must be kept in the child's file.
- **E-** exclusions – Recorded by Alison Hayton
- **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 Academy 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 must be put on Sims



Important Safeguarding and Attendance Information for all Parents & Carers

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.

Safeguarding

At Oasis Academy Aspinal we strive to safeguard and promote the welfare of all of 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 take action. We have a legal duty to assist our colleagues in other agencies with child protection enquiries.

At Oasis Academy Aspinal we are working hard to improve the attendance of all our children. It affects children's learning if they do not attend school 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 ill we need you to let us know that day before 9am. You can do this by telephoning the Academy on 0161 223 0053 or in person at reception. If we don't hear from you we will contact you by telephone or by visiting your home. For absences to be authorised as illness we will need confirmation that you have contacted your and been given appropriate advice.

Attendance is closely monitored and only the Principal 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 receive a Penalty Notice. 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 on the register and then they must be collected by you. 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 doesn't return, the absence will be recorded as 'unauthorised' and you will get a letter. Please be aware that the Local Authority monitor all unauthorised absences and where appropriate will issue Penalty Notices or consider prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Holidays in term time

Holidays in term time are not authorised. Parents who have already taken their children out of the Academy or are planning to do so are warned that if they remove their child from the Academy during term time without authorisation they will receive a penalty notice or other statutory action as deemed appropriate by Manchester City Council. **A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for**



each child. The Penalty Notice is a fine of £120 if paid within 28 days, which is reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days.

A penalty notice is applied for unauthorised absence equalling 10 sessions (5days) or more. These days do not have to follow consecutively and can be merged together within 50 days. 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.

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Thank you for your support