

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 cannot learn in school if they are not 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 is led by **Matt Foster, SENDCO / Safeguarding Lead & Attendance Officer**. Appendix 1 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 for class conversation and display. To support this process a weekly Safeguarding and Attendance meeting will be held with the Leadership Team. 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.

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
- Reward for the class with the highest attendance each week
- Star in the Jar prize draw for each class – children who have 100% attendance that week
- Half termly rewards for children with 100% attendance

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, before 9am, 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 or evidence for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. All absences could result in a home visit from the Academy Safeguarding Team. Persistent absence (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.

Nursery

If your child's attendance becomes a cause for concern and children are currently on a waiting list, the Academy may remove your child's name from the register and offer this place to another child.

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 may 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 difficulties that are affecting attendance/punctuality need to speak to a member of the Attendance / Safeguarding team for support.

Collection and Late collection of children

Children may only be collected by an adult (18 years or older) whose details have been provided to the Academy prior to collection by a parent/carer. We ask all parents to make sure their child is collected on time by an adult at the end of the school day 3.15pm. Children can get upset if they are not collect on time. If your child is not collected by 3.30pm, we will try and contact you. Children will be taken to after school club at 3.30pm while waiting for parents to arrive. Parents may incur a charge if this happens. 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.

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.

If a child is absent from the Academy for 10 school days without any reasons being provided or any contact made with parents, a referral to the Child Missing in Education team will be made and this could result in the child losing their place at the Academy.

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, a meeting will be held with the Attendance Lead and Associate Principal. Where necessary, Oasis Academy Aspinal will recommend legal action working in partnership with the Local Authority. A Penalty Notice will be issued if a child is absent from school for 10 sessions (5 days) within 100 days.

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 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 Lead 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.

The Attendance Lead 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
- Take Statutory Action
- Arrange for contact to be made with parents on first day absence with support from office staff.
- Home Visits
- Phone call home
- Depending on outcome of phone call - home visit
- Reason for absence recorded on computer

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 families are prompted to give reasons for absence at the main office
- Discuss non-attendance and lateness with parents day to day and log this on the computer, 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 Lead 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**
- Provide medical evidence if absent for 3 days or more with illness
- 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 or Reception, they must attend regularly. Failure to attend could result in the academy place being withdrawn.

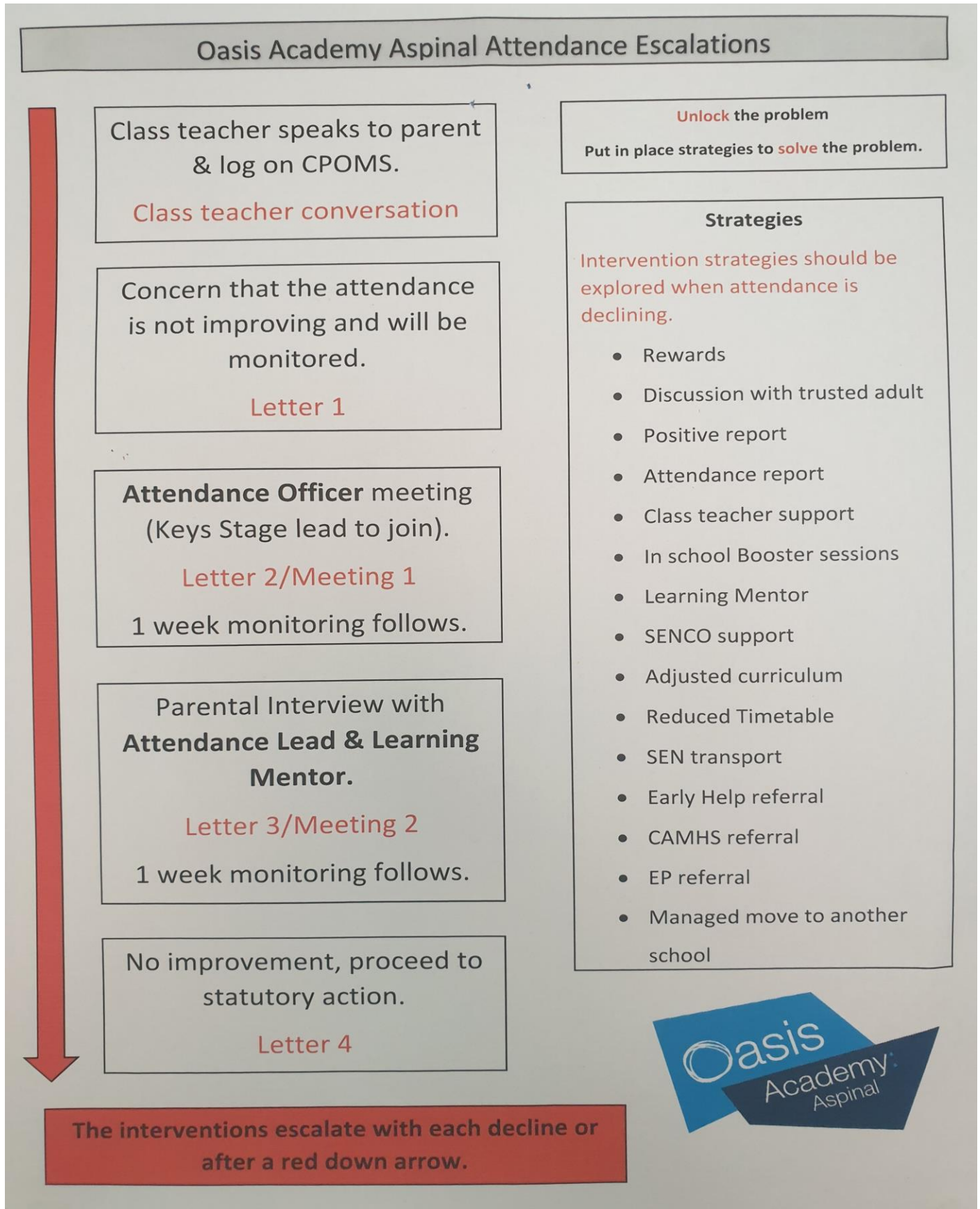
Taking the Register

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.

APPENDIX 1



APPENDIX 2

Good attendance means...

Being in school at least 95% of the time or 180 to 190 days

