

Ormiston Endeavour Academy

Attendance Policy

This policy will be reviewed by the Policy Sub Committee

Date Policy approved:	10/10/17
Date of Review:	10/10/18

Record of changes

Date	Changes Made	Agreed by	Authorised for use by	Date of Review

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ORMISTON ENDEAVOUR ACADEMY ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Ormiston Endeavour Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all its students and recognises this can only be achieved by supporting and promoting excellent Academy attendance for all. This is based on the belief that only by attending the Academy regularly and punctually will children and young people be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them. High attainment depends on good attendance.
- 1.2 The whole Academy community – students, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and Academy governors – have a responsibility for ensuring good Academy attendance and have important roles to play. The purpose of the policy is to clarify everyone's part in this.
- 1.3 The policy is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. The Academy will ensure that all members of the committee know of the policy and have access to it. 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.

1.5 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 Assistant Principal "Support for learning" in the first instance for them to determine whether a review of the policy is required in advance of the review date.

2. Academy roles and responsibilities

- 1.4 All staff (teaching and support) at Ormiston Endeavour Academy have a key role to play in supporting and promoting excellent Academy attendance and will work to provide an environment in which all our students are eager to learn, feel valued members of the Academy community and look forward to coming to the Academy every day. Staff also have a responsibility to set a good example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.
- 1.5 Attendance Leader (Assistant Principal Support for Learning)
The Attendance Leader will oversee, direct and co-ordinate the Academy's work in promoting regular and improved attendance and will ensure the Attendance Policy is consistently applied throughout the Academy. This person, will also ensure that up-to-date attendance data and issues are shared weekly with the Senior Leadership Team, are made regularly available to all staff, students and parents (who will regularly be reminded about the importance of good Academy attendance) and that a report is prepared for the governing body half termly.

He/she will ensure that attendance issues are identified at an early stage and that support is put in place to deal with any difficulties.

1.6 Registration

The Academy is required to mark the attendance register twice each day; once at the start of the day and once during the afternoon session. Classroom teachers/form tutors are responsible for completing the attendance registers using the prescribed codes (see below).

REGISTER CODES

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory Academy age absence	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	Academy closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

The register will be called promptly at **8.30am** by each form tutor and at **13.40pm** by the class teacher, and a mark will be made during the registration period in respect of each child. Morning registers are to be submitted to the Attendance Office by **8.35am**.

The registers will close at **9.15am** and **13.55pm**. Any student who arrives **after** the closing of the register will count as **absent**. Students who arrive before the register closes will be counted as **present** but will be dealt with under the academy's policy on punctuality and lateness.

2 Categorising absence

- i) A mark will be made in respect of each child during registration. Any child who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absence unless leave has been granted by the Academy in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the Academy as legitimate. Where a reason for absence is given and accepted by the Academy at a later stage, the register will be amended in such a way that the original entry and the amendment / correction are distinguishable. The decision about whether the absence should be authorised or unauthorised rests with the academy.
- ii) Ormiston Endeavour Academy recognises the clear links between attendance and attainment, and attendance and safeguarding children. It recognises that inappropriate authorisation of absence can be as damaging to a child's education as authorised absence, will potentially send a message to parents that any reason for non-Academy attendance is acceptable and can render children extremely vulnerable to harm. If absence is frequent or continuous, and except where a child is clearly unwell, staff at Ormiston Endeavour Academy will challenge parents about the need and reasons for their child's absence and will encourage them to keep absences to a minimum. A note or explanation from a student's home does not mean an absence becomes authorised. The decision whether or not to authorise an absence **will always rest with the Academy**.
- iii) If no explanation about an absence is received by the Academy **within 24 hours of receipt of the absence letter, the absence will remain unauthorised;**
- iv) **If no explanation about an absence is received past the 24 hours' notice, a fixed penalty notice may be issued.**
- v) Absence may be authorised in the following circumstances:
 - (a) where leave has been granted by the Academy in advance, for example
 - a student is to participate in an approved performance for which a license has been granted by the Local Authority;
 - a student is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion – in authorising such an absence the individual circumstances of the particular case and the overall pattern of attendance will be considered;
 - in **exceptional** circumstances, permission has been granted for a family holiday for which the parents have sought permission in advance.
 - (b) where the Academy is satisfied that the child is too ill to attend;

- (c) where the student has a medical appointment (although parents should be encouraged to make these out of Academy hours wherever possible, and to return their child to Academy immediately afterwards – or send him / her to Academy beforehand); Evidence of the appointment may be required;
 - (d) where there is an unavoidable cause for the absence which is beyond the family's control, e.g. extreme weather conditions;
 - (e) the absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents belong;
 - (f) the student is of no fixed abode, his/her parent is engaged in a trade which required him/her to travel, the student has attended Academy as often as the nature of the trade permits **and**, have reached the age of six, he/she has attended 200 sessions in the preceding 12 months;
 - (g) in other **exceptional circumstances** (e.g. a family bereavement) and **for a very limited period**.
- vi) Except in the circumstances described above, absences will be unauthorised. Any unauthorised absences may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.
- vii) Some examples of reasons for **not** authorising absence would be:
- no explanation has been given by the parent;
 - the Academy does not feel that there is sufficient evidence that the circumstance above have been met;
 - the student is staying at home to mind the house;
 - the student is shopping during Academy hours;
 - the student is absence for **unexceptional** reasons, e.g. a birthday;
 - the student is absence from the Academy on a family holiday without prior permission;
 - the student has been stopped during a truancy sweep and is unable (or the parent is unable) to give a satisfactory reason for the absence.
 - The student truants from the Academy

The academy defines persistent absenteeism (PA) as missing 10% or more of schooling across the year **for whatever reason**.

2.1 Approved educational activity

Where a student is engaged in off-site approved educational activities, the Academy will check his/her attendance on a daily basis before entering the appropriate code in the register.

2.2 Class registers

In order to track students' whereabouts throughout the day, deal with any truancy that occurs after morning or afternoon registration and to ensure the safety of students, subject teachers will take a register at the beginning of every lesson to record absence and lateness. Any sudden absences that occur during the day will be picked up immediately by the Academy office and measures taken to locate the student.

2.3 Staff Training

The Academy Attendance Leader will ensure that all staff responsible for taking registers, including any temporary or supply staffs, receive sufficient training to enable them to perform the task accurately.

3. **Collection and analysis of data**

3.1 The Attendance Leader will ensure that attendance data is complete, accurate, analysed and reported to the senior leadership team, parents and the governing body. The report should include commentary on the trajectory and the Academy target. The data will inform the Academy's future practice to improve attendance and prevent disaffection.

3.2 Attendance is monitored by year group, tutor group, at subject level and by reasons for absence. It is also analysed by gender, ethnicity, pupils / students with special educational needs and those who are vulnerable to poor attendance.

3.3 Accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE within the stipulated time frame.

4. **Systems and strategies for managing and improving attendance**

4.1 Attendance has a very high profile at Ormiston Endeavour Academy and is regularly discussed at Local Governing Body meetings, assemblies and in tutor groups. Parents are regularly reminded in newsletters and Academy meetings about the importance of good attendance and its links to attainment and is part of the whole Academy monitoring programme. Weekly attendance figures are displayed prominently in school.

4.2 Ormiston Endeavour Academy has procedures for dealing with unexplained absences within a week.

First-day calling

Ormiston Endeavour Academy has in place a system of first-day calling. This means that parents will be telephoned, or sent a text message on the first day a student is absent without explanation to establish a reason for the absence. This helps to identify at an early stage students who do not have a good reason for absence or who may be absent without their parents' knowledge.

Where it is not possible to make contact with parents on the first day of absence, the Academy will send a letter to them by post.

Monitoring

If a student's attendance reaches 96% or less, the attendance officer will contact Parents/carers, and a two week period of monitoring will begin.

Any student's attendance that is 95% or less will be required to have medical evidence for any medical absence. A letter will be sent home at 95% to all in this category, and parents requested to meet with the Head of House to discuss the absences.

Meetings with parents

Where there is an emerging pattern to a student's absence over a 2 week period (or sooner if staff are particularly concerned), with or without explanation, the Academy will invite parents to a meeting to discuss the reasons for the absences. During the monitoring period should the attendance not improve then plans should be put in place with the parents and student to resolve any difficulties and improve the attendance within a specified time limit – usually no more than 6 weeks. It will be explained to parents that any future absences will be

unauthorised unless there is clear evidence of a good reason for them.

4.3 Referral to the Education Attendance Service

If there continue to be unauthorised absences by the end of the specific time (or sooner if the student is failing to attend Academy at all), the matter will be referred to the Academies attendance officer and Assistant Principal: Support for Learning, who is the attendance lead.

Any attendance at 90% or below may result in the school making a referral to the local authority for a fast track to be set up. Further information on attendance can be found on the suffolk.gov.uk website.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Students are expected to arrive at school, and be in the correct room for registration, on time every day. It is very disruptive to their own education, and that of others in their class, if they are late. Students who arrive after the register closes will be marked absent for the whole session (a session being a morning or an afternoon). This absence will be unauthorised unless the Academy is satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the student to be late. Such a reason will not include things such as missing the bus, clothes in the washing machine or lost/misplaced shoes. A student who is persistently absent by reason of lateness will be dealt with in the same way as other students with an emerging pattern of absence.

Students who arrive late for Academy but before the register closes will be set a detention by the pastoral team. Parents will be informed by text.

4.5 For health and safety reasons it is important that the Academy knows who is in the building. Students arriving late should report to the Attendance Office. **It is important that all students arriving late follow this procedure.**

4.6 For the same reason it is important that students leaving the premises legitimately (e.g. for a medical appointment), or returning to the Academy later in the day sign in and out with the Attendance Officer and leave via the student entrance.

4.7 Post-registration truancy

Post-registration truancy occurs when a student goes missing from the Academy having previously registered for the session. This behaviour not only means the student will not be receiving a full-time education, it also potentially renders him/her vulnerable to harm. Ormiston Endeavour Academy takes this very seriously and will endeavour to ensure it does not happen and if appropriate, sanctions will be set.

4.8 Study Leave

Ormiston Endeavour Academy believes that students' needs are best met if they attend Academy every day in the period leading up to examinations. No study leave will be granted during this period. Therefore students will be expected to attend Academy in the usual way.

5. **Term-time Holidays**

5.1 Term-time holidays are intended for children whose parents cannot to take holiday at any other time.

5.2 Ormiston Endeavour Academy will consider every application individually, its policy is NOT to grant leave of absence for a holiday other than in the most exceptional circumstances. Time off Academy for family holidays **is not a right**. An application must be made in writing, with appropriate evidence, **in advance** of the intended holiday.

5.3 Ormiston Endeavour Academy will consider authorising holidays for:

- service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays during term-time;
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis;
- parents who are subject to a strict and unnegotiable holiday rota and evidence is provided to this effect.

5.4 Requests for holidays for the following reason will not be authorised:

- cheaper cost of holiday;
- availability of the desired accommodation;
- poor weather experienced in Academy holiday periods; and
- overlap with beginning or end of term.

5.5 Ormiston Endeavour Academy will respond to all requests for a leave of absence in writing giving the reasons for the decision.

5.6 Ormiston Endeavour Academy will NOT authorise a holiday during periods of GCSE examinations.

6. Extended leave of absence

6.1 In considering absence for extended trips overseas Ormiston Endeavour Academy will take account of the following:

- a visit to family overseas has a very different significance from a normal 'holiday';
- such visits may be important in terms of children's identity and self-esteem as they grow up;
- parents may feel that the reasons for their visit outweigh the importance of their child's uninterrupted attendance at the Academy (although parents could be encouraged to use the Academy holiday periods for at least part of their trip);
- the reasons for wishing to make a visit is more difficult, particularly for minority ethnic families, where huge distances and high costs are involved;
- where extended leave of absence is granted there will be an expectation that the pupil undertakes some school-set work during this period.

7. Parent/carer responsibilities

7.1 The prime responsibility for ensuring children receive an appropriate and full-time education rests with parents/carers (defined by the Education Act 1996 as those with parental responsibility and those who have the care of a child), who will be supported and encouraged by Ormiston Endeavour Academy.

7.2 Ormiston Endeavour Academy expects parents/carers will:

- ensure their children attend the Academy regularly;
- support their children's attendance by keeping requests for absence to a minimum;
- not expect the Academy to automatically agree any requests for absence, and not to

condone unjustified absence from school.

7.3 Parents will also be expected to:

- notify the Attendance Officer at Ormiston Endeavour Academy on the first day of absence;
- ensure their children arrive at Academy on time, properly dressed and with the right equipment for the day;
- work in partnership with the school, for example by attending meetings and consultations, taking an interest in their children's work and activities;
- contact the Academy without delay if they are concerned about any aspects of their children's Academy lives. Ormiston Endeavour Academy will endeavour to support parents to address their concerns.

8. Student responsibilities

8.1 All students should be aware of the importance of regular Academy attendance. If they are having difficulties that may prevent them from attending Academy regularly, they should speak to their form tutor.

8.2 Students should attend all their lessons on time, ready to learn. If they have been absent from Academy they should give their form tutor or attendance officer a note from their parents to explain the absence. Students also have a responsibility for following Academy procedures if they arrive late.

9. Governor responsibilities

9.1 The Governing Body shall make arrangements for ensuring that their functions relating to the conduct of the Academy are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children who are students at the Academy.

10. Conclusion

10.1 Regular Academy attendance is a necessary contributor to ensuring the outcomes of *Every Child Matters*:

Be healthy –

- attendance at school supports children's emotional and social health and development;
- the Academy curriculum teaches children to be healthy.

Stay safe –

- schools and the LA have a statutory duty to promote the safety and welfare of children;
- the best way to safeguard children is to ensure they attend school regularly.

Enjoy and achieve –

- good school attendance supports children in reaching their maximum potential and enjoying the fulfilment this brings.

Make a positive contribution –

- membership of an Academy community builds confidence, gives children a sense of belonging and teaches them to contribute to and be responsible for the well-being of others.

Achieve economic well-being –

- good Academy attendance supports engagement in further education, employment or training in the future, which in turn helps to support a prosperous and fulfilling life-style.

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1. When does my child need to be in School?

Your child should be at Academy in good time for registration. The morning register will be called promptly at **8.30am** and the afternoon register at **13.40pm**.

2. What happens if my child is late?

Registration finishes at **8.45am** in the morning.

If your child arrives between **8.30 am** and **8.45am** he/she will be marked

late. If your child arrives after **8.45am** he/she will be marked **absent**.

If your child arrives between **13.40pm** and **13.55 pm** he/she will be marked **late**.

If your child arrives after **13.55pm** he/she will be marked **absent**.

(Students who arrive after registration should report to the Attendance Office to be signed in. If a student is late on two or more occasions a meeting may be arranged with a member of staff to discuss reasons / difficulties for lateness and a sanction may be given.)

3. Does the Academy need letters explaining my child's absence or will a phone call do?

We would expect a parent to telephone the Academy on every day of absence. If you do not phone us, we will phone you. However, we need a written explanation on your child's return to school. If we do not receive an explanation, or if the explanation is unsatisfactory, we will not authorise the absence, and this will be shown on your child's end of year report. This may also result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.

4. What reasons will the Academy accept for absences?

- student illness;
- emergency dental / medical appointment (please make routine appointments after Academy hours or during the holidays);
- day of religious observance;
- family bereavement;
- Student attending an interview for a job, college, etc.

Except in the case of illness and bereavement, you should ask for permission for your child to miss attendance at the Academy well in advance, giving full details. In cases of recurring absences through illness, you may be asked to produce medical evidence.

5. What is unacceptable?

The Academy will not authorise absence for day trips, for example visiting relatives, shopping, birthdays or looking after brothers or sisters.

6. Will the Academy contact me if my child is absent?

The Academy operates a first day response to absences: we will send you a text message or phone you if we have not heard from you. This is because it is our responsibility to ensure your child's safety as well as their regular Academy attendance.

If we are concerned about aspects of your child's attendance or punctuality we will contact you to discuss ways of improving areas of concern.

7. I am thinking about sending my child on an extended absence for an overseas trip to visit relatives. What should I do?

The Academy recognises that such absence can be important for children to keep in touch with their extended family. Contact your child's class teacher or form tutor as soon as possible to discuss the best time for such a visit.

The Academy would strongly recommend that such absences do not take place during your child's GCSE course (Years 9, 10 and 11) examinations. You need to complete an application form for extended leave of absence and if the Principal then approves the visit, the Academy will set work for your child to complete while away.

As far as possible we will ensure the work set reinforces the educational value of such a visit.

8. What can I do to encourage my child to attend the Academy?

Make sure your child gets enough sleep and gets up in plenty of time each morning. Ensure that he/she leaves home in the correct clothes and properly equipped. Show your child, by your interest, that you value his/ her education.

9. My child is trying to avoid coming to the Academy. What should I do?

Contact your child's form tutor, or Lead Pastoral officer immediately and openly discuss your worries. Your child could be avoiding the Academy for a number of reasons – difficulties with Academy work, bullying, friendship problems or family difficulties. It is important that we identify the reason for your child's reluctance to attend the Academy and work together to tackle the problem.

In some cases you may find it helpful to discuss the circumstances of your child's difficulties with an Education Welfare Officer. The Academy may also refer you to an

Education Welfare Officer who works with staff and families if difficulties with attendance arise. The Education Attendance Service is based at:

Southern Area Education Office
Endeavour House
8 Russell Road
Ipswich
IP1 2BX

01473 265348

ATTENDING THE ACADEMY REGULARLY

A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. Attending regularly and on time

Regular attendance will help you make the most of the opportunities here at Ormiston Endeavour Academy. It will help you:

- keep up with your Academy work and get the best results you can;
- Get a job – employers like people who are reliable.

Remember, your attendance at the Ormiston Endeavour Academy is shown in your reports.

2. Absences

Acceptable reasons for absences include:

- illness;
- your own emergency dental / medical appointments (please make routine appointments after Academy hours or during the holidays);
- day of religious observance;
- family bereavement;
- attending your interview for a job, college, university, etc.

Looking after your brothers and sisters, birthdays, general trips such as shopping and helping at home are NOT reasons to be absent from school.

You will need a note from your parents to explain ALL absences from school. You will also need a note if you arrive at Academy after 8.45 am in the morning. If you do not bring a note, or the explanation on the note is unsatisfactory, the absence will count as unauthorised and will be shown on your end of year report.

3. Need help?

Problems with your school work? Are you being bullied? Are your friends giving you a hard time? Are things difficult at school? Are things difficult at home?

You may feel that missing school is the answer. It is not – it may even make things worse. **TALK TO SOMEONE** – your class teacher, form tutor, another member of staff, your parents. We will do everything we can to help you get over the problem.