



Attendance Policy

IMPORTANT

OAKWOOD ACADEMY WILL NOT TOLERATE ANY FORM OF ABUSE, RADICALISATION OR EXTREMISM TOWARDS CHILDREN OR YOUNG PEOPLE

OAKWOOD ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

"Promoting learning excellence - Inclusion beyond the barriers".

OAKWOOD ACADEMY: MORAL PURPOSE

"We are united in the belief that together we can inspire all learners to dream, persevere and achieve so that we can change lives for the better, now and for future generations to come"

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD?

If you are worried About a Child or Young Person speak to any of the following staff immediately to the DSL or DDSL

'SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY'

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SECTIONS	page
CONTENTS	2
SAFEGUARDING POLICIES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON EXTREMISM/RADICALISATION SAFEGUARDING /HEALTH AND SAFETY SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL (SMSC)	3
ATTENDANCE POLICY OAKWOOD ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE LAW	4
SCHOOL PROCEDURES ABSENCE	5
LAC & CP ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION AND WORK PLACEMENT PROCEDURES PUNCTUALITY AUTHORISED ABSENCE LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME.	6
A GRADUATED RESPONSE TO ABSENCE SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION (LEVELS 1-4) CONSIDERATION FOR APPLYING FOR PENALTY NOTICE WARNINGS DEPENDING ON CIRCUMSTANCES	7-8
ATTENDANCE RESPONSIBILITIES PROMOTING ATTENDANCE THE REGISTRATION CODES	9 -10
RISK OF FGM DURING HOLIDAYS : ATTENDANCE ISSUES: INDICATIONS > PROCEDURES	11
CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION GUIDANCE	12
CONNECTING POLICIES FOR SAFEGUARDING PURPOSE	13

SAFEGUARDING POLICIES CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The safeguarding policies (list back page) are in place to help prevent children and young people up to 18 years of age being at risk of harm. Oakwood Academy advises the safeguarding policies are read in conjunction with each other. If you have any concerns or questions regarding policies please refer to a member of SLT.

WORRIED ABOUT A CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

If you are **worried about a child or a young person** being at risk of harm please speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in their absence the Deputy DSL. **DO NOT IGNORE IT.**

EXTREMISM/RADICALISATION

All staff and Governors are to be familiar with the indicators of vulnerability to extremism and radicalisation and the procedures for dealing with concerns. Staff are made aware of the potential indicating factors when a child is vulnerable to being radicalised or exposed to extreme views. These include peer pressure, influence from other people or the internet, bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour, family tensions, race/hate crime, lack of self-esteem or identity, prejudicial (damaging) behaviour and personal or political grievances. Staff to report any concerns to Single Point of Contact (SPOC).

SAFEGUARDING /HEALTH AND SAFETY

Oakwood Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. At Oakwood we provide a caring, positive, safe and stimulating environment that promotes the social, physical and moral development of the individual child and we strive to provide this within our classrooms. All staff follow health and safety guidelines.

SPIRITUAL, MORAL, SOCIAL & CULTURAL

Oakwood work to prevent children and young people from developing extreme and radical views by embedding SMSC principles throughout the curriculum. During lessons we strive to create a learning environment which promotes respect, diversity and self-awareness and equips all of our children and young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they will need to succeed in their future lives.

For more details/information on Safeguarding refer to the following documents:

- Keeping Children safe in education (statutory guidance for schools and colleges) : September 2019
- Working together to safeguard children (A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children : July 2018
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in educational settings : May 2019
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures (Oakwood Academy)

Important: Please refer to the list of safeguarding policies (on back page) includes specific Safeguarding/Child Protection issues towards children and young people.

Attendance Policy Oakwood Academy

The purpose of this Policy is to provide the staff of Oakwood Academy with the appropriate procedures for attendance of pupils. Any questions regarding the Policy should be addressed to the Director of Inclusion.

Mission Statement : "Promoting learning excellence - Inclusion beyond the barriers".

Oakwood Academy believes that access to education, irrespective of age, gender, race or ability is the right of every child. Regular, prompt attendance allows every child access to the education which they are entitled to by law and which is vital for academic, personal and social development. Oakwood is committed to working in partnership with parents/carers and the Education Welfare Officer in order to achieve this. We will always endeavour to support parents/carers in overcoming any barriers to achieving regular attendance.

Attendance is subject to various education laws and this attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department of Education

At Oakwood Academy we aim to meet the government target figure of 95% for whole school attendance for each academic year. We will do this by:

- Maintaining a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- Promoting an effective partnership with the Education Welfare Officer.
- Keeping accurate records.
- Providing clear guidelines for staff on registration procedures.
- Informing parents and carers of their legal responsibilities regarding attendance and punctuality.
- Dealing promptly with unauthorised absences.
- Rewarding good attendance half termly and termly.
- Reviewing attendance regularly and reporting to governors every half term.
- Having supportive and graduated procedures to improve attendance and punctuality which are promoted by effective and consistent communication between home and school.
- Actively discouraging parents and carers from taking holidays during term times.

Roles, Responsibilities and the Law

The Education Act 1996 informs that the parent/carer of every child of compulsory school age is responsible for ensuring that their child receives efficient full time education that is suitable to their individual age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Parents/carers can be fined or prosecuted if they fail to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Education Welfare Officer can help parents meet the statutory obligations regarding school attendance.

The Local Education Authority has to offer educational provision for all school age children through schools.

Oakwood Academy must keep an attendance register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions and report pupils who fail to attend regularly or accrue unauthorised absences of more than two weeks. The Education Welfare Officer has the role of assisting the Local Education Authority to meet the statutory obligations on school attendance.

The main school responsibilities relating to attendance registers are as follows:

- There must be an attendance register for each class or form containing the names of all the pupils in the class or form whether of compulsory school age or not.
- The registers must be marked at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session during the time set apart for registration in the timetable. Registers will also be marked at the beginning of each lesson. This will be completed through SIMS programme.
- Under the education (Pupils' Attendance Records) Regulations 1991, from 1st August 1991 all schools/academies must distinguish in their attendance registers between authorised and unauthorised absences, of pupils of compulsory school age.
- The Executive Principal (Mrs Nicholson)/Head of School (Mrs Southwood) must keep, or supervise the keeping and preservation of the records of that academy/school or department.
- Registers must be available for inspection during academy/school hours by H.M.I's and officers authorised by the LA, who shall be permitted to make extracts from them.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period will have their absence recorded as authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity according to reason. If there is no known reason it will be recorded as unauthorised in the first instance. Our first day response policy is for the office staff to phone home when a child is absent to ascertain a reason (if parents or carers haven't contacted school first) and also to promote our safeguarding policies. First day response commences at 9.00am. If contact cannot be made by phone then a text message will be sent. Parents and carers should reply to school as soon as possible. Where contact cannot be made, Oakwood will take all reasonable and proportionate steps to establish the whereabouts of the child. Further phone calls and text messages will be sent during the school day. The EWO will be contacted and a home visit will be requested if there are continued concerns about the whereabouts or attendance of a child.

Absence

Parents must phone Oakwood on the first day of absence to explain why their child is absent, and every day thereafter until they return to school. An exact reason for absence should be given when the child returns to Oakwood. The appropriate symbol can then be recorded in the register. If there are concerns about continued absence and in conjunction with the EWO, Oakwood will carry out home visits and spot checks. The EWO, the Heads of Year and the

Director of Inclusion will meet on weekly basis to discuss pupil attendance and identify concerns.

Looked After Children and on Children Protection Plans

Oakwood will make every effort to ensure the safety and whereabouts of the pupils who are Looked After or on Child Protection Plans. Parents and Carers will be expected to follow the school procedures on first response. If no contact can be made, a same day home visit will be carried out to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil. Relevant agencies and key workers will be contacted to inform them that pupils are not attending school and cannot be contacted.

Vocational Training and Work Experience placements

External Providers will be given a copy of the attendance policy and expected to follow the procedures set out. Oakwood will make every effort to ensure the safety and whereabouts of the pupils on vocational training and work experience placements. Contact must be made every day with the placement to verify pupil attendance (unless they come into school first), this will be carried out by the office, the Learning Mentors, 6th form staff and the external provider. If a pupil does not attend placement and no reason has been given through first day response, a same day home visit must be carried out to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil. Attendance at placement must be verified by 9.30am.

Punctuality

Morning registration will take place at 8.20am for the main site and 6th form and 8:25am for Silver Street. The registers will remain open for 40 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning session unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. Oakwood transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be taken at the start of lesson 5.

Pupils arriving after 8.20am but before the end of the registration period will be marked as present, but will be coded as late before registers close unless there is good reason for being late, such as transport issues. Parents/carers will be informed of persistent lateness (other than transport issues) and pupils sanctioned within school.

Authorised Absence

As to the definition of authorised absence, existing law authorise certain categories of absence. Section 39 of the Education Act 1944 protects parents from prosecution where a child is absent on any day:

- when prevented from attending by sickness or any unavoidable cause.

- exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parents belong.
- on the grounds that suitable transport has not been provided and Oakwood is not within walking distance (3 miles for secondary pupils).

A small proportion of our pupils attend various medical appointments due to the complexities of their needs. This happens on a regular basis. It may not always be possible immediately to identify an absence as authorised or unauthorised. In such cases, a provisional mark should be entered in the register until clarification has been obtained.

Leave of absence for holidays during term time.

From 1st September 2013 new guidance issued by the Department for Education informed schools that absence for reasons other than those stated above during term time is **not allowed**. This particularly includes holidays taken during term time. The Department for Education only allows head teachers discretion to authorise an absence for a holiday if they believe there are **exceptional circumstances**. **Parents could be subject to a fine of £60 if paid promptly or £120 for allowing absence due to a holiday taken during term time. This fine is per parent, per child.** More information on attendance and the subject of absence due to holidays can be found on the school website.

A Graduated Response to Absence Support and Intervention

The Heads of Year will work closely with form tutors to monitor attendance. When there is cause for concern they will follow guidance from the school Educational Welfare Officer to put the following strategies in place. During these procedures all support/attempted support needs to be evidenced, including phone calls, text messages, letters home, support packages and interventions such as reduced timetable, alternative arrangements etc.

- **LEVEL 1 (Low level of need) for pupils whose attendance was over 96% but has now dropped below 95%.**

A level 1 letter is issued to the parent/carer as soon as a pupil's attendance has 2 unauthorised absences or dips below 95%. The pupil is spoken to by the Head of Year to identify reason for unauthorised absence. EWO may offer guidance or advice when completing statutory register checks.

- **LEVEL 2 (Medium level of need) for pupils whose attendance continues to deteriorate or parents/carers have not responded to previous contact/agreement. Attendance has dropped to between 94% - 90%**

If there is little or no improvement in attendance, a level 2 letter is issued inviting the parent/carer into school. There may be some underlying reasons why the pupil does not attend school. Wider agency support is available for the family or pupil through the Team around the Family meeting (TAF). This coordinates support.

At Level 2 no more absences can be authorised without medical evidence. Attendance is constantly monitored and should supporting medical evidence not be provided for absences then this will instigate a referral to the EWO.

- **LEVEL 3 (High level of need) for pupils whose attendance has dropped below 90%.**

If after two weeks there is still no improvement, the parent/carers are again invited into school via the Level 3 letter. At this point, any other agencies involved with the child may be invited alongside the EWO. School Health may clarify any underlying medical reasons for absences. If a parent does not attend, a visit is made to the home. At this meeting a decision is then made jointly with the EWO as whether to include the parent in the termly cohort of Fast Track to improve attendance: if the parent does not attend the meeting a decision is still made.

- **LEVEL 4 (Court proceedings/fines/fast track) for pupils whose attendance has not improved despite all efforts of intervention and support.**

The case is referred to the EWO. The EWO and school will consider the appropriate actions i.e. Penalty Notice/Fast Track.

Schools may request a Penalty Notice Warning from the Education Welfare Service to parents whose children have 10 or more authorised absences. This could result in a fine of £60 per parent, which if not paid, would increase to £120 per parent. If this then goes unpaid, parents will be summoned to Manchester Magistrates Court and prosecuted for failing to ensure their child attends school regularly. Magistrates may then increase the fine and also impose court costs of up to £300 if found guilty of the offence.

Parents whose children have ongoing attendance issues that are not being addressed or improved may be placed on the Fast Track to Prosecution. This is a more serious process which takes place over an approximate 12 week period involving 2 or 3 meetings with the Education Welfare Officer and a member of school staff. If sufficient progress is not made then parents will be summoned to Manchester Magistrates Court. Parents would be prosecuted under section 444(1a) of the Education Act 1996 which states:

The parent knows that his/her child is failing to attend regularly at the school and fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to do so.

Magistrates would then consider a number of options if the parents are found guilty:

- Absolute Discharge
- Conditional Discharge
- Fine - not exceeding £2500
- A Parenting Order
- A Community Order
- Custody - not exceeding three months.

Oakwood Academy will consider applying for penalty notice warnings in the following circumstances:

- Unauthorised absence of ten sessions or more (There are two sessions in a day)
- Persistent late arrival (after the register has closed and an unauthorised absence is created).

The Local Authority can instigate prosecution under the Education Act 1996 section 441 or 441(a) when:

- Parent/Carers persistently fail to respond to any correspondence in relation to their child's absence
- Evidence indicates that support has been offered but parents/carers have failed to engage
- Targets have been agreed with the parent/carers through the fast track procedure but improvements have not been made

Disposal for prosecutions for non Oakwood attendance can range from a fine to a custodial sentence.

Promoting attendance

- Oakwood regularly promotes attendance in form time and through a class reward scheme. Points can be earned in every lesson for work and behaviour and prizes given to pupils with the highest score (if pupils are absent then no points can be earned and therefore no prizes at the end of the week). These results are celebrated in Oakwood assemblies.
- Regular attendance is also promoted every term. Pupils are rewarded with a range of certificates, badges and vouchers that can be used at the local shopping centre. These are given to pupils who have 100% attendance each term and 100% attendance for the whole year.

Attendance Responsibilities

At Oakwood it is everyone's responsibility to promote good attendance. Mr Donnelly is the Lead for Attendance and will liaise closely with Heads of Lower and Upper School under the guidance of the Education Welfare Officer to ensure high levels of promotion, support and intervention for good attendance and punctuality. The governors will be kept informed and updated on attendance figures and policies.

Class teachers have a responsibility to mark pupils in for each lesson so we know the whereabouts of all pupils at all times and for attendance monitoring purposes. Pupils who are attending planned interventions must go to their form or lesson first to receive their mark. It is the responsibility of the form tutor to collect dinner money, give letters etc...

The registration codes

Oakwood use SIMS, a computerised system for keeping Oakwood attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

Class teachers are only allowed to input a present mark or a N. The office staff will input the correct code once an appropriate reason has been given.

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	Exclude (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	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory Oakwood-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	Oakwood closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Risk of FGM during Holidays

The UK Government has written advice and guidance on FGM. Please refer to the following for more information : Oakwood Academy's : Safeguarding & Child Protection policy : FGM Policy

Girls are at particular risk of FGM during school summer holidays. This is the time when families may take their children abroad for the procedure. Many girls may not be aware that they may be at risk of undergoing FGM. UK communities that are most at risk of FGM include Kenyans, Somalis, Sudanese, Sierra Leoneans, Egyptians, Nigerians and Eritreans. However women from non-African communities that are at risk of FGM include Yemeni, Kurdish, Indonesian and Pakistani women."

Procedures in place:

Oakwood Academy has decided to take proactive action to protect and prevent our girls being forced to undertake FGM. The Executive principal /Head of School and Governors do this in 4 ways:

1. A robust attendance policy that monitors holidays and destinations, extended or otherwise.
2. FGM training for Child Protection Designated Person and disseminated training for all staff at the front line dealing with the children.
3. FGM discussions by Child Protection Designated Person with parents of children from practising communities who are at risk.

4. A comprehensive PSHE/PSE curriculum is delivered to all pupils throughout school and appropriate Relationship/Sex Education is delivered to KS4 and KS5.

In order to protect our children it is important that key information is known by all of the school community.

Indications that FGM has taken place:

- Prolonged absence from school with noticeable behaviour change - especially after a return from holiday.
- Spend long periods of time away from the class during the day.
- A child who has undergone FGM should be seen as a child protection issue. Medical assessment and therapeutic services to be considered at the Strategy Meeting.

Children missing education, statutory guidance

All schools (including academies and independent schools) must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register under any of the fifteen grounds listed in the regulations in the 'Children missing education, statutory guidance for local authorities 2016 document Annex A'. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at standard transition points - when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school - unless the local authority requests that such returns are to be made.

When removing a pupil's name, Oakwood will notify the local authority and must provide the following information: (a) the full name of the pupil, (b) the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil normally resides, (c) at least one telephone number of the parent, (d) the pupil's future address and destination school, if applicable, and (e) the ground in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be removed from the admission register (see Annex A).

*Please refer to the Children missing education, statutory guidance policy for full information.

CONNECTING POLICIES FOR SAFEGUARDING PURPOSE

If you are worried about a child or young person (in relation to issues listed below) or have any concerns or questions regarding Child Protection refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or, in their absence the Assistant DSL.

LIST OF SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

child missing from education : child missing from home care : child sexual exploitation (CSE) : bullying including cyber bullying : domestic violence : drugs : fabricated or induced illness : faith abuse : female genital mutilation (FGM) : forced marriage : gangs with youth violence : gender based violence against women and girls (VAWG) : mental health : private fostering : preventing radicalisation : sexting : teenage relationship abuse : trafficking.

From DfE, Keeping children safe in education: September 2019: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

Oakwood Academy believes it is very important that all the Safeguarding Policies are read in conjunction with one another to quickly identify and take any necessary and appropriate action to help prevent children and young people up to 18 years of age being at risk of harm.

MORE INFORMATION VISIT: NSPCC.org.uk: TES & NSPCC safeguarding: GOV.UK keeping children safe

SAFEGUARDING CONNECTING POLICIES (situated on the Oakwood website) www.oakwoodacademy.co.uk

Anti-Bullying

Anti- Cyber Bullying

Anti- Racism

Anti-Radicalisation

Attendance

Behaviour

Safeguarding & Child Protection Procedures

Care/Intimate Care/Administration of Medication /Touch

Children Missing From Home

Complaints

Child Protection (including the safeguarding of all children)

Data Protection

Drugs

e-safety (online)

FGM

First Aid

Health & Safety

ICT and Computing

Lone Worker

PSHE

Pupil Friendly Safeguarding

SRE

SMSC

Safer Recruitment

SMSC

Trafficking

Visits/Trips

Whistleblowing

The Safeguarding Policies are up-dated annually or as necessary depending on new statutory guidance or legislation.

THE GOVERNORS AGREEMENT TO POLICY

Signed (Chair of Governors) Date

The Safeguarding Policies are up-dated yearly or as necessary depending on new statutory guidance or legislation.