Oasis Academy Silvertown Attendance Guidance

(To be read in conjunction with Oasis Community Learning Attendance Policy, available at: https://oasiscommunitylearning.finalsite.com/uploaded/National_Policies/Attendance_Policy.pdf)

1. Aims

- To ensure that overall Academy attendance is 98% or higher
- To raise the profile of the importance of high-level attendance among students, parents, and other staff
- To outline a procedure for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies
- To eradicate persistent lateness
- To explain the legal processes for persistent lateness and absence

2. Legislation and guidance

By law, all children of compulsory academy 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 an academy or by making other arrangements to give them a suitable, full-time education. As a last resort, schools and local authorities have legal powers to deal with poor attendance.

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

The Academy fulfils its responsibilities in respect of taking a morning and afternoon session registration.

Academy procedures

1.3 Attendance register

In line with the Department for Education guidance, Oasis Academy Silvertown will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The morning register will close at 09:00, meaning any subsequent student arrival will be coded as an unauthorised absence unless there is sufficient reason for this to be authorised.

2.3 Unplanned absence

If a student is absent from the Academy, it is vital that a parent contacts the Academy at the earliest opportunity to provide a reason for absence, and no later than 8am. Email office@oasissilvertown.org or by calling the school office 020 7059 2500.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no adequate reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. The decision and authority to authorise an absence lay with the Academy in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996. Parents cannot authorise absence. Where deemed necessary, the Academy reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness. After five days of authorised absence across the academic year, or three days of consecutive authorised absence, the Academy will unauthorise all subsequent absences. The process by which the Academy determines authorisation of absence can be found in Appendix A.

Menstruation and attendance

We recognise that menstruation can be uncomfortable, but it is important that students continue to attend school wherever possible so they do not miss valuable learning. We provide appropriate support in school, including access to pastoral staff, first aid and sanitary products We will always respond sensitively to individual needs to help students feel comfortable and able to continue their day but absence due to this would be unauthorised.

Concerns and attendance

We understand that parents and carers may feel worried and want to keep their child at home; however, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and can slow down how quickly we are able to support. We encourage students to attend as normal while you work with us, as this allows us to understand the situation fully and put the right support in place without interrupting their learning. Our staff are here to listen and work in partnership with you to resolve any concerns in a timely and supportive way.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

It is an expectation of the academy that medical and dental appointments are taken out of school time. Missing lessons, even for medical and dental appointments, has a detrimental impact on student progress and achievement.

The academy recognises that it is not always possible to schedule appointments outside of school time. In the rare occasion that a student must attend a medical appointment during school time, parents must notify the academy office in advance and provide written evidence of the appointment. Patterns of medical and dental appointments frequently taking place during school sessions will result in further follow up investigation and action. Regardless of this reason, all medical appointments are recorded as an absence and will impact the student's overall attendance percentage.

AM appointments should be booked between 8am and 11am to allow the student to return to the academy for PM registration. Any appointments for 11am onwards require students to attend in the morning and then leave for appointment.

Diarrhoea and vomiting guidance

Norovirus, also known as the 'winter vomiting bug', is the most common stomach bug in the UK. It can spread easily through close contact, or by contaminated surfaces, food or water. The main symptoms of norovirus include a sudden onset of nausea, followed by projectile vomiting and diarrhoea, usually 1 to 2 days after becoming infected. Other common symptoms include a high

fever, a headache and aching arms and legs. Good hand hygiene is important to stop norovirus spreading

To stop norovirus spreading, you should:

- ✓ wash your hands thoroughly using soap and warm water after using the toilet or contact with a sick individual and before preparing and eating food.
- ✓ stay off school or work until you have not been sick or had diarrhoea for at least two days
- ✓ not rely on alcohol gels instead of washing your hands, as these do not kill the virus
- ✓ wash any contaminated clothing or bedding using detergent at 60°C using disposable gloves to handle any items
- ✓ use bleach-based cleaners to disinfect surface

Most people will make a full recovery in 2-3 days without needing any medicine. It is important to keep hydrated – especially children and the elderly. Try not to visit A&E or GP surgeries if you have symptoms of norovirus unless advised to do so by a healthcare professional, as this may spread the bug to others. Call ahead to a GP or ring NHS 111 if you are worried about your symptoms. Further information is available at NHS 111 or NHS.uk (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/norovirus/

4.3 Lateness and punctuality

It is the Academy's responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if a student attends regularly and punctually. The Academy expects all students to arrive at the academy, registrations, and sessions on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A student arriving late will disrupt not only their own continuity of learning but also that of others. Occasional lateness to the academy or lessons will result in correction; patterns of lateness over a period will result in further follow up investigation and action.

Persistent lateness will count towards overall lateness

All students should arrive at the academy by 08:30 when the gates close. Any student arriving after 8:30 will be required to enter through the main visitor entrance and will receive a 20-minute correction for lateness. Lessons begin at 8.40. The register will close at 09:00, and subsequent student arrivals will be recorded with an unauthorised absence, unless there is a valid reason for this to be authorised. Students arriving after 9am will receive a 60-minute correction for truancy.

5.3 Following up absence

Parents of a student who is not present in school will be notified of their absence. Parents have the responsibility to inform Oasis Academy Silvertown of student absence. It is a safeguarding priority for us to know the whereabouts of all students.

Absences will be followed up through the attendance intervention system, which will include, but is not limited to:

- Phone calls to parents/guardians
- Attendance Letters
- Meetings with the Pastoral Team and SLT
- Home Visits
- Attendance Trackers/ contracts

Parental contact following absences starting from Autumn term:

1. Letter 1a: email from the Attendance Officer - 2 days of absence or 1 separate absence events within 1st half term
2. Letter 1b: meeting with Dean of students - 4 days of absence within 1st half term
3. Letter 1c: meeting with Head of Year - 6 days of absence within the year starting from Autumn term, followed by a three-week attendance monitoring report.
4. Letter 1d: meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team - 8 days of absence, following stage 1a-1c
5. Letter 1e: meeting with the principal – following failure to improve attendance in previous stages and student now has 10 or more absences.
6. Letter 1f: referral to Newham Attendance Team following two-week monitoring.

Please note: The school may move more quickly through stages where attendance concerns are significant, persistent, or where safeguarding concerns are identified. The primary aim of this process is to work collaboratively with families to improve attendance and ensure every student achieves their full potential.

6.3 Reporting to parents and carers

In order to support parents in meeting their legal requirements and to maximise individual student attendance, the Academy seeks to keep parents/carers informed of their child's attendance and to actively involve parents on attendance issues. Methods include:

- Unexplained/unaccounted for absence letter asking for reasons
- Escalating letters warning of concerns
- Parental meetings
- Attendance percentages included on student reports and reported annually
- Discussion at Parents' Meetings/Evenings

3. Authorised and unauthorised absence

1.3 Granting approval for term-time absence

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents should avoid making routine appointments for students during the academy day. Parents should not take family holidays during the term time period. Parents should be advised that we cannot authorise any term time holidays.

2.3 Legal sanctions

All parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends the Academy on a regular and punctual basis. Should any student attendance or punctuality become a concern, they will be subject to an Education Welfare referral. The Academy and Newham Local Authority will work in partnership where legal action is required.

Legal action includes:

- Penalty Notice: A Penalty Notice may be issued for each student who has unauthorised absence or lateness. Following 6 sessions of unauthorised absence, a Penalty Warning Letter will be issued. There will be a review for three weeks, and should the student attendance continue to decline, a Penalty Notice will be issued once the pupil has 10 sessions of unauthorised absence.
- A Penalty Notice may be considered when a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10-school-week period. This total can include a combination of unauthorised absences, such as time taken during term without permission and lateness after the register has closed. AM registration and PM registration count as two absences.

- 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 the Academy. 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. If a student's attendance continues to decline, and unauthorised absence increases despite efforts by the Academy to support the pupil in attending school, a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Service, upon which a Court Panel meeting will be convened.
- Under the national framework adopted by Newham (from 19 August 2024), the cost of a Penalty Notice is:

    - £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days
    - £160 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days
    - A second notice (within three years) is £160, with no early payment discount
    - A third offence may result in prosecution rather than a further fine
    - Also, any student arriving after 9am will have a truancy consequence rather than 'late'. This will be a 60-minute correction, after s chool.
    - Before any enforcement action is taken, our priority is always to work in partnership with families to support regular attendance and punctuality. We encourage parents and carers to contact the academy as early as possible if they are experiencing difficulties so that support can be put in place.

Any prosecution will appear on a criminal record.

3.3 Exceptional Circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, such as the bereavement of an immediate family member (including a grandparent, parent, or sibling), the principal may authorise a period of absence.

- Authorised absence will normally not exceed three school days.
- Where the student has travelled overseas for a funeral, the school will require documentary evidence of travel arrangements.
- In cases of bereavement, the school will require written confirmation of funeral arrangements.

All requests for authorised absence under these circumstances must be submitted to the principal for consideration prior to the absence wherever possible.

4. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance is a whole academy initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, students, and all members of academy staff.

The diagram below highlights the whole academy approach to attendance monitoring and intervention. This is led by the Attendance and Punctuality lead who works with academy staff to monitor and improve attendance, while raising the profile and emphasising the importance of attendance at individual and whole academy level.

To promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, the Academy uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies. As appropriate to student age these include:

- Coaching Group awards for highest attendance
- Display of individual attendance
- Display of year group/class attendance
- Certificates
- Weekly Head of Year Assembly mentions
- Celebration Assembly prizes
- Letters home
- Attendance rewards throughout the year

5. Attendance monitoring

The Academy has an escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concern.

The principles underpinning the model will be used to promote consistency both across the different year groups of compulsory academy age and within each year group. In summary these are as follows:

- The attendance statistics for every student at the Academy will be displayed weekly in assembly
- Attendance matters will receive positive reinforcement in assemblies and line ups.

In cases that levels of attendance decreases, the Academy will make use of the following escalation guidance:

1. **Green 97% - 100%,** or increased attendance- Students in this group are in the best possible position to achieve their full potential in GCSEs, leading to secure their dream job. Heads of Year will celebrate these students weekly, and the academy will recognise and reinforce their level of attendance.
2. **Pink 96.99% – 95%,** or an initial fall in attendance - Students in this group will receive intervention and support from the pastoral team to increase their attendance to above

97%. This will be in the form of a letter home and a phone call with the Attendance Officer or Pastoral team.

3. **Blue 94.99% - 90%,** or consecutive weeks of falling attendance - Students in this group will receive intervention and support from their Head of Year to increase their attendance to above 95%. This will be in the form of a letter home and a meeting with a member of the Pastoral Team.
4. **Red 0 - 89.9%,** or persistent consecutive or non-consecutive weeks of falling attendance - Students in this group will receive intervention and support from the Assistant Principal, as well as the wider Senior Leadership Team. This will be in the form of a letter home, meeting with the AP and an inclusion plan linked to the Inclusion Team. As this attendance percentage continues to fall below the Government Persistent Absence target, it may be necessary to refer the poor attendance to the Education Welfare Officer and Legal Services at the Local Authority. They may wish to work with parents/carers to improve the attendance of the students in the red group. This includes taking legal action where required.

The SLT attendance lead, Heads of Year and attendance officer meet weekly to discuss attendance actions and key students with attendance concern, will be highlighted

6. Children at Risk of Missing Education

Policies and guidance related to Children at Risk of Missing Education can be found in the OCL Attendance Policy.

The contact for Newham CME issues is: General Enquiries | Newham Connect

7. Students leaving the academy and off-rolling

The OAS has a commitment to safeguarding students. Therefore, the destination of all students who leave the academy will be tracked.

Academy leaders will ensure that detailed records are kept for students who stop attending the academy and are removed from the roll/admissions register.