Registration and Attendance Policy

Implementation date: September 2018

Review date: September 2020

1   **Introduction**

Promoting regular school attendance is a key component in the Government's strategy to raise educational standards.

The Academy is committed to a positive policy of encouraging students to attend school regularly. The Academy will work with parents and students to secure this aim.

2   **Aim**

The aims of this Attendance policy is to ensure that there is an efficient system, known to all, for ensuring all students attend the Academy on a daily basis, or for ensuring a reason for non-attendance is known to the Academy.

3   **Taking the Register**

3.1   Students of compulsory school age must have their attendance registered twice per day. It is the practice of this Academy to register ALL students (including those over compulsory school age). The Academy also records lesson attendance.

3.2   The register must be taken twice daily at the start of morning and afternoon sessions. In addition all teaching staff must check that the students timetabled to be in their lessons are present for each session.

3.3   The register must record whether the student is present, absent, or attending an approved educational activity.

3.4   An 'approved educational activity' is defined as:
- 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 work experience, field trips and educational visits;
- Link Courses where students attend a FE college for part of their time, or students receiving part of their education off-site at another location while remaining on roll and under Academy supervision (e.g. sick students being taught at home), or attending approved an sporting activity:

When a student of compulsory school age is absent it must be marked as an 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence using the appropriate code.

3.5   Registers will be closed at 9.00 am for the morning session and 1.30 pm for the afternoon session. Any student arriving after 9.00 am will be recorded with an unauthorised absence mark and this will reflect in their overall attendance.

4   **Responsibilities**

Excellent attendance and punctuality, in close conjunction with excellent learning and teaching lay the foundations for an outstanding education and future employment / career prospects. The correlation between attendance and attainment is evident – being on time and attending school each day is the most important aspect which will enable a child to fulfil their potential, to maximise on their learning time.

We expect all the Academy's stakeholders: students, staff, parents, carers and Academy Councillors to be committed to ensuring high standards of attendance and punctuality.

Responsibilities:

4.1   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 the policy is promoted and implemented throughout the Academy; and
   • is known by the parents and carers.

4.2   The Principal will:
   • set attendance targets as part of the Academy Development Plan and target-setting process;
   • monitor progress with linked senior staff;
   • ensure 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;
   • instruct relevant senior staff to notify parent/carer as appropriate if a student of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly his/her parents commit an offence;
   • initiate appropriate staff strategies to improve attendance;
   • liaise with appropriate bodies (including the Local Authority's agencies) over persistent absentees;
   • liaise with the Local Authority agencies and police when they wish to exercise their powers to enforce truants to return to the Academy; and
   • make an annual report with statistics to the Academy Council.

4.3   The Deputy Principal (Pastoral) will:
   • oversee all attendance arrangements;
   • work with Assistant Principals, Heads of Year and Attendance Officer to ensure the efficient running of the system; weekly meetings, actions set and completed by relevant staff; promote importance of attendance to all staff and students;
   • make periodic checks of the registers to monitor student absence; ensure coding is concise, complete and correct;
   • make regular checks on absence notes and the reasons for absence;
   • ensure unaccounted-for absences are followed up by Heads of Year / Pastoral Managers in getting in touch with parents/carers (if there is reasonable concern about a child's welfare, the Deputy Principal (Pastoral) will immediately inform the Principal who will decide what action to take including informing the relevant local authority agency);
   • monitor and check that the SOL attendance tracking system is being followed and completed correctly and fully; correct coding; liaise with SOL Consultancy;
   • keep the Principal and Senior Leadership Team informed of progress completed by Heads of Year and Assistant Principals; advise of setting of attendance targets for individual year groups;
   • advise the Principal on any strategies that could be initiated or improved.
   • At the end of each day ensure every absence is accounted for and recorded.
   • deal with issues of inadequate registering;

4.4   Attendance Officer:
        The role of the Attendance Officer is to be the key link for families to support them in ensuring their child attends the Academy each day and on time.

        The Attendance Officer will:
        •   Keep and maintain accurate attendance and punctuality records
        •   Check the coding of all year group registers (in SIMs) at least three times a week
        •   Ensure the coding is accurate by the Friday there are no 'N' codes in the registers
        •   Attend all year group weekly attendance meetings;
        •   Keep the attendance tracker accurate and up-to-date;
        •   Conduct meetings and record discussions with students about their attendance;
        •   Contact parents / carers to inform them of their child's attendance or punctuality and outline plans for improvements;
        •   Sending out standard letters regarding attendance;
        •   Collating and recording registration and attendance information;
        •   Take and record messages from parents regarding absence;
        •   Ensure the Signing In/Out Book is complete;
        •   Contact parents/carers of absent children where no contact has been made – for vulnerable students on the First day of absence and for all other students on the Third day of absence, or direct Heads of Year to do so in their place;
        •   Provide reports and background information to inform discussion between Head of Year/Pastoral Manager or Assistant Principal;
        •   Liaise with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

4.5   Heads of Year / Pastoral Managers will:
        •   ensure all student absences are noted and absence notes received from parents/carers;
        •   make regular checks on the efficiency of the registering; monitor attendance of their year groups' attendance and key student groups, together with persistent absence figures
        •   make regular checks on absence notes;
        •   ensure all suspected truancy is followed up and dealt with;
        •   contact parents/carers over student absences where appropriate;
        •   attend weekly attendance meetings to update Assistant Principal on progress of identified actions and individual student's attendance; set and ensure completion of actions set for form tutors, communication of these to year group tutor teams;
        •   make reports to the Deputy Principal (Pastoral) on the efficiency of the system; and
        •   liaise with the Deputy Principal (Pastoral) over training needs.

4.6   Form Tutors will:
        •   ensure students are registered accurately within first ten minutes of Tutor time;
        •   ensure students bring absence notes and these are recorded in preparation;
        •   monitor their tutor group's attendance;
        •   positively promote excellent attendance with their form group;
        •   enquire on any issues with individual student's attendance, inform Head of Year and Attendance Officers of any signs of suspected truancy; or absence without prior notification;
        •   inform the Head of Year of any possible underlying problems which might account for absences.

4.7 Classroom Teachers will:
- ensure students are registered accurately within first ten minutes of the lesson starting;
- ensure students bringing in absence notes are recorded in preparation;
- monitor their teaching group's attendance;
- positively promote excellent attendance with their teaching group;
- inform the (Head of Year) of the names of students who are absent without notification;
- Make lessons and learning experiences engaging, enjoyable, stimulating and challenging to ensure students look forward to attending; ensure the learning environment is a safe, secure and positive setting where students feel at ease and ready to learn.

4.8 Parents/Carers are required to:
- ensure their daughter or son attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence (Attending means registering before the attendance register is closed for the session);
- inform the Academy of their child's absence and reason why on the first day of non-attendance, or as soon as possible thereafter on the same day;
- write an explanatory note or phone on the day of return to the Academy;
- make any request for leave of absence on the Academy's official leave of absence form;
- support the school in upholding sanctions for poor attendance or punctuality;
- work with the Academy and/or Attendance Officer to resolve any attendance or punctuality problems;
- avoid taking their child out of the Academy during term time or the school day;
- take an active interest in their child's attendance and punctuality and notify the Academy if they have any concerns.

5 Inspection

The Deputy Principal (Pastoral) will ensure that the Academy Admission and Attendance Registers are available for inspection as required.

6 Leave of Absence

6.1 Leave of absence for a student can be granted only by the Principal on recommendation from the Head of Year and Attendance Officer / Education Welfare Officer.

6.2 Parents will be expected to use the Academy's official leave of absence request form. These forms are available from the main Academy office.

Parents/Carers should be aware the law now **enforces** the position regarding holiday leave. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. A Headteacher should determine the number of school days a child can be absent from school if leave is granted. It is not our Academy's policy to permit leave of absence.

7 Holiday Leave

7.1 Holidays should not normally be taken during term time. Any exceptional requests must be made to the Principal on the official form. The Principal will direct the Attendance Officer/Head of Year responsible to authorise or decline the request. Each request will be looked at on an individual basis.

7.2 If the student goes on a holiday which has not been approved by the Academy it will count as unauthorised absence.

8   **Short -Term Leave**

   8.1   The Academy can grant short-term leave for family reasons. It is for the Principal to determine the reasonableness.

   8.2   Dental and medical appointments during school time are not encouraged. If the student leaves for an appointment after registering, they must be recorded on the signing out sheet. If the student returns to the Academy before the second register is taken, they will not be recorded as absent.

9   **Religious Observance**

There is no legislation or regulation or DCSF guidance on leave of absence for religious observance.

The Principal will review any such application on an individual basis, and in consultation with the Deputy Principal (Pastoral), Head of Year and the parent/carer.

The Academy expects advance notice, since religious festivals are likely to be fixed well ahead.

10   **Taking a student off the Register**

The Principal will authorise the taking of a student's name off the register in accordance with the Regulations currently in force. Any student that does not attend the Academy for a period of 10 days or more will be referred to the local authority as missing from education unless the absence if planned and authorised.

11   **Equal Opportunities**

In making and implementing this policy the Academy will take into account the Oasis Community Learning equal opportunity policies.

The Academy will inform staff where allowances have to be made for students with disabilities.

12   **Monitoring and Review**

The Principal will review the working of the policy with appropriate senior staff, and make regular reports to the Academy Council on the attendance of students.

Oasis Community Learning will monitor the use and effectiveness of this policy and review it at least every two years.