



**Osborne**  
Co-operative Academy Trust

Self-help  
Self-responsibility  
Equity  
Equality  
Democracy  
Solidarity

## **Attendance Policy**

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L. Coates	April 2019	1.0	
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## Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT) incorporated around the principles and values of the international co-operative movement. These are Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility and Solidarity, along with the ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others. These values and principles underpin all our actions.

### Aims

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust requires its schools to:

- Instil the expectation that all members of the Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust have excellent attendance to ensure that the central purpose of learning is not disrupted.
- Establish an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and challenge the behaviour of those pupils and parents/carers who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents/carers and appropriate agencies to provide information, advice, and support and maintain dialogue and a shared concern for the education and success of the pupil.
- Continually monitor the curriculum and learning environment to ensure the promotion of good attendance developing a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels safe and secure.
- Relate attendance issues directly to the school's co-operative values, ethos and curriculum.
- Maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality, establishing **96% and above** as the benchmark for all pupils.

### Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is a pupil welfare and safeguarding issue. Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust takes its safeguarding responsibilities in these areas very seriously. Schools also have safeguarding duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 in respect of their pupils, and as part of this should investigate any unexplained absences. Academies and independent schools have a similar safeguarding duty for their pupils, under Working Together to improve school attendance statutory guidance 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

### Trust Educational Welfare Officers (EWO)

- Maintain regular contact with the school and support the Attendance Officers in carrying out their duties.
- Develop effective relationships with potentially vulnerable families.
- Carry out home visits following a prolonged or unusual absence, lack of contact or a concern raised by the school. These can be announced or unannounced visits.
- Collaborate with the Local Authority to ensure that all requested documentation for Court cases is completed in a timely manner.
- Attend court cases when required.
- Should attendance be a concern, we will request a meeting with parent/carer and put in place an action plan to improve this which will be monitored. Failure to improve will escalate the attendance management process which may result in referring to the local authority and incur PN/Prosecution. See attendance flow chart below.
- Pupils are classed as Persistently Absent when their attendance falls below 90%, and then as Severely Absent once it goes below 50% during the academic year.
- Each school has attendance trackers to closely monitor pupils/students whose attendance becomes a concern and then support/intervention is put into place to stem the absence. Parents will be notified of the concerns by telephone/email/school communication apps and the school will seek to work with them to resolve any issues; Pupils will be supported as appropriate and in line with other trust policies, along with any required referrals; Where absence continues, the academy will invite the parent/carer to discuss the matter with the Attendance Lead or other staff member as appropriate; If the issue continues to be

unresolved, the school will then discuss the situation with the Education Welfare Officer who will take appropriate action.

- The priority of bridging the gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers remains. Ofsted and the DfE are focused on removing the differences in attainment/attendance and seeing that all children have the same chances of success. Pupils are seen as individuals and have bespoke improvement plans which recognise that they each have their own set of challenges, talents and interests. We will aim for the overall attendance of disadvantaged pupils to be at least to that of 'non-disadvantaged' pupils.

Following a cause for concern for attendance, parents/carers may be requested to provide medical evidence for any future absences. This may be prescription, copy of a medical appointment, proof of telephone appointment to discuss a medical query or proof of any medication.

### School Staff

- Attendance Registers are legal documents and must be accurate. Within every Trust school teachers will be expected to take a register at the beginning of every session in our Secondary Schools and at the start of the morning and afternoon session in our Primary Schools. No blanks should be left on the register, any pupil not present when the register is taken should be marked absent.
- Each school will hold an appendix to this policy detailing the actions taken if a child is absent or missing from a session.
- **Where a pupil has not attended school for 5 consecutive school days medical evidence will be required, or the absence will be coded as an unauthorised holiday and a Penalty Notice may be issued. The EWO team want to work with families to prevent statutory action and in some cases may offer a home visit in exceptional circumstances where medical evidence cannot be provided.**
- Absence of 10% will be recorded as persistently absent in line with national expectations.
- Each school will embed systems that raise the awareness of the importance of attendance that will support the pupils in achieving at least attendance at 96% or above.
- Attendance will be monitored closely and reported at half termly meetings of the Local Governing Body and at a Trust Board level through the School on a Page (SOAP.)

### Parents/Carers

Have a responsibility to:

- Understand that they are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance.
- Ensure their child arrives on time, in school uniform and ready to learn.
- Telephone their child's school on the first day of any absence to explain the reason for absence and give an expected return date. The timing and frequency of this phone call will be established in each school's appendix to their policy.
- Provide an up to date contact number and an emergency number that may be used in exceptional circumstances. It is important, that should the need arise, we can contact Parents/Carers without delay.
- Note the dates of public, statutory and internal examination periods. These are usually held in May/June each year. The dates for public examinations cannot be changed for any reason. If the public exams and Statutory Assessment Tests are missed, they cannot be retaken during that examination cycle.
- Adhere to government guidance regarding term time holidays (any holiday taken in term time will be unauthorised and may be subject to a penalty notice.) Please note there is new guidance from 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024 which outlines the changes to penalty notices.

### HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

In September 2013 amendments were made to 'The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006'. As a result of this Headteachers/Heads of School are no longer able to grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust understands the various reasons for parents/carers taking children on holiday during term time i.e. financial savings, restricted working holidays etc., however these would not be considered exceptional circumstances. Taking your child out of school during term time could be detrimental to your child's educational progress. A pupil who has 10 days absence will only attain 94.7% attendance in the year.

Holidays are not authorised during term time in response to the Government and Thurrock/Essex Authority initiative and has been agreed by Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust Board. Holidays will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

Our schools follow the recommended practice for Government and Thurrock/Essex Authority initiative.

- Parents/Carers take responsibility for ensuring children's regular, uninterrupted school attendance.
- Parents/Carers do not have a legal right to take children out of school on holiday.
- In exceptional circumstances (see below) it may be necessary for planned absence. All such cases should be requested in writing with the Headteacher/Head of School.
- If leave is taken without authorisation it will be recorded as unauthorised absence, and a Penalty Notice may be issued. See below for more information.
- Penalty Notices must be paid in full. Instalment payment is not acceptable.
- If the recipient fails to pay the fine within 28 days the Local Authority will prosecute for the offence to which the Notice applies, save for in very limited circumstances when the Notice may be withdrawn.

**A PENALTY NOTICE IS A TYPE OF FINANCIAL PENALTY YOU MUST PAY**

**From 19 August 2024** you will be issued a Penalty Notice if your child has a total of 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in any period of 10 weeks.

**Penalty Notices are issued to each parent, for each child.**

This means if Penalty Notices were issued for 3 siblings, they would be issued to both parents – 6 Penalty Notices in total.

**Legal proceedings will be taken against you if payment of a Penalty Notice is not made within 28 days.**

**First offence**

First Penalty Notice per parent, per child, you must pay:

- **£80** if you pay within 21 days
- **£160** if you pay after 21 days but within 28 days

**Second offence within 3 years**

Second Penalty Notice within 3 years per parent, per child, you must pay:

- **£160** within 28 days

**Any other offence within 3 years**

Legal proceedings will be taken against you if:

- your child has any further unauthorised absences within 3 years

**LEGAL PROCEEDINGS COULD LEAD TO A HIGHER FINANCIAL PENALTY AND WILL RESULT IN A CRIMINAL RECORD**

Leave of absence forms should be obtained from the school office and submitted back to the school at least 5 working days before the first day of intended absence.

A pupil's absence during term time can seriously disrupt learning. Whilst absent they miss the teaching provided and are also less prepared for the subsequent lessons after their return.

## **Punctuality**

Any pupil arriving later than registration should enter school via the main entrance reporting to the school office. If accompanied, a parent/carer should give a reason for the lateness, which will be added to the register. The pupil will then be sent to their classroom.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern a Penalty Notice may be issued.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. Arriving late can be embarrassing for the pupil which may then encourage further absence. Good timekeeping is an important life skill which will help our pupils as they move through their school life and out into the wider world.

## **Children Missing in Education**

- Follow first day calling and contact procedures as defined by the school policy. Continuous efforts should be made by the school to make contact with the family, including calling all emergency contacts and home visits.

A registered pupil is deemed to be missing when:

- a) They fail to attend school without any explanation.
- b) The school has been unable to establish the reason, or locate the pupil with any of the contact names at the last known address, or from intelligence from the wider school community; or
- c) The pupil's parents/carers have not provided any information to indicate a change of education provision, unavoidable cause for the pupil's absence or that the pupil is travelling with them whilst in pursuit of their business.
- d) Family have moved out of borough and new address may or may not have been provided.

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust schools will adhere to the guidance set out in 'Thurrock Council Protocol and Procedures' and 'Essex County Council Children Missing from Education Policy' for:

- Children missing education.
- Children not in receipt of full time education.
- Children missing from a school role.

The Osborne Trust follow the Local Authority policy and procedures for children missing in education which may result in a referral to the LA. This referral may trigger other referrals including but not limited to social care, housing and health professionals.

Electronic copies are available at: [www.thurrock.gov.uk/information-for-schools](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/information-for-schools). Essex schools will have access to Essex County Council policies via Infolink.

Within each school's appendix actions will be identified for pupils at high risk (if a child is subject to Child Protection Plan, Child in Need Plan or is a Child Looked After. Alternative actions will be identified for pupils who are not deemed to be at high risk in line with the above guidance. However, if at any time the schools have concerns about a pupil's welfare they should refer to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

### **Pupils missing from school - high risk**

The following actions will be taken by professionals if a child goes missing from a school roll and is considered to be at high risk.

This applies to any child that is:

- subject to a child protection plan
- subject to a child in need plan
- a looked after child

The child's key worker is to be notified within the first 24 hours of the unauthorised absence if no home contact can be made. An immediate Child Missing Education (CME) referral should also be made to the Pupil Tracking and Child Employment Officer, who will arrange for the Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to contact the key worker and agree a plan of action.

Where it is suspected or known that a pupil is at potential risk or harm, or where there is information or reason to suspect the pupil has been a victim of criminal activity:

- the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub should be notified immediately.
- the Education Welfare Service (EWS) will be notified as soon as possible afterwards.

## **Essex**

The Missing Pupil Checklist is the document used by a school to refer a pupil who is missing from education. If MECES are able to make contact with the family via phone and confirm their whereabouts (which is within a reasonable distance from the school) the case will be referred back to the school as a non-attendance issue and the school may wish to consider referring to MECES for irregular school attendance. If the school have concerns about a pupil's welfare, they should refer for a police welfare check. The role of MECES is not to request police welfare checks where the school has concerns, but to make all necessary checks to attempt to locate the child.

## **Deletions from a School Roll**

The Osborne Trust follow the Local Authority policy and procedures for pupils on school roll in line with the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007. These revoke the 1995 regulations and subsequent amendments of 1997 and 2001, but only in England.

## Appendix A

### **Warren Primary School Attendance Policy Appendix**

#### AIMS

##### **To Improve the Overall Percentage Attendance of Pupils at School**

- a. Apply 'Whole School Attendance Policy' consistently.
- b. Establish and maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality, establishing 96% and above as the benchmark for all pupils.
- c. Relate attendance issues directly to the school's co-operative values, ethos and curriculum.
- d. To work with the school's attendance officer to support pupils and their families to improve and raise awareness of the importance of attendance.

##### **To provide support, advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils**

- a. Use the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer to ensure improved communication with parents/carers when they visit or phone in.
- b. Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents/carers.
- c. Involve parents/carers from earliest stage.

##### **To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school**

- a. Every day absence contact through a phone call or email – 01375 482288 or [admin.WPS@osborne.coop](mailto:admin.WPS@osborne.coop)
- b. Make full use of computer-generated letters - Management Information System
- c. Promote expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents/carers home visits and attendance panels.
- d. Explore a wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships (e.g., individual provision, Securing Success, Parent Forum, Governors).
- e. Encourage all parents/carers into school via Parents Evening, option choices, Parent Forum, New Intake Evening, parent/carer workshops, family learning and coffee mornings.

##### **To implement a system of rewards and sanctions**

- a. Opportunities for regular attendance, system of rewards. Competition draws once a term is in place.
- b. Actively promote attendance and associated reward.
- c. Ensure fair and consistent implementation.
- d. Involve joint School Councils in system evaluation.
- e. Make use of appropriate sanctions.
- f. School specific details on how they promote good attendance

##### **To promote effective partnerships with other services and agencies**

- a. Designate key staff for liaison with external services and other agencies.
- b. Carry out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
- c. Gather and record relevant information to support Family Welfare Manager.
- d. Hold attendance panels with the Osborne Trust Education Welfare Officer.
- e. Arrange multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
- f. Establish and maintain list of named contacts within the local community, e.g. community police contact officer.
- g. Encourage active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Warren Primary School believes that it is the responsibility of staff, students and parents/carers to ensure that each student maintains excellent attendance.

### The school

Attendance is a student welfare and safeguarding issue. The school takes its safeguarding responsibilities in these areas very seriously:

- Maintaining appropriate registration processes.
- Should a student not arrive at school by the designated time and no explanatory telephone call or email has been received, a member of staff will make contact with the child's parent or carer via phone or text.
- A home visit may be carried out by our Education Welfare Officer.
- We always notify parents/carers if students abscond from school premises and if necessary, notify the police.
- If a student becomes unwell whilst at school, parents/carers will be informed where necessary. Depending on the severity of the illness, a decision will be made as to whether the student should be collected by a parent or carer.
- Students will be admitted as soon as possible after referral to the school and no later than on the sixth day following an exclusion unless there are exceptional circumstances. Attendance is recorded the day following a student's admission interview.
- When students join the school, they will attend an induction where their needs are assessed. The school records attendance from the first day of induction.
- Where a student has not attended school for one-week medical evidence will be required or the absence will be coded as an unauthorised holiday and a Penalty Notice may be issued.
- The school provides a tutor who closely monitors the attendance and progress of students in their care. The tutor will maintain contact and provide information to parents/carers.
- The school provides an administrator to ensure that the attendance of all students is closely monitored, and absence effectively dealt with.
- Attendance of all students is reported to parents/carers on school reports. Where attendance has impacted student progress, this will be discussed with individual families.

### Calling Procedure

#### Day 1

- First day calling is completed using phone or text.
- The system is linked to Bromcom and pulls in a list of all absent pupils (N Code).
- Bromcom is then manually checked by the Attendance Officer to agree or remove any due to the school being made aware of the reason for the absence.
- Sends messages to all available numbers from Bromcom.
- This function happens several times throughout the day, is recorded and offers the function to reply.
- Responses are then input straight to MIS removing pupils from the list.

#### Day 2

- If there is no response from parent/carers our Attendance Officer will telephone all contacts, speak to classmates and teachers.

#### Day 3

- If there is no response a home visit is carried out by the EWO Team as a welfare check

## Day 5

- If a child is off absent, even though medical evidence is provided, a home visit may be carried out by the EWO Team as a welfare check.

## **Vulnerable Children**

The school will have a vulnerable list. If there are any concerns about a pupil, or a pupil is CP or CIN, telephone calls/texts are made on the first day of no response to parent/carer. This process works in tandem with guidance and advice from the designated DSL or Deputy DSL to ensure the appropriate action stage is initiated. This may also involve outside agencies including but not limited to the safer school's officer or social services.

## **Parents/carers**

Strong links and effective communication with parents/carers are vital.

- 100% attendance is the expectation.
- Parents/carers must telephone the school by 8:00am on the first day and everyday absence to explain the reason for absence and give an expected return date. This can also be done through email to [admin.WPS@osborne.coop](mailto:admin.WPS@osborne.coop)
- Parents/carers are legally responsible for ensuring their child's regular attendance. Students must arrive on time, in school uniform and ready to learn.
- Parents/carers must provide an up-to-date contact number and 2 emergency contact numbers that may be used in exceptional circumstances. It is important, that should the need arise, we can contact parents/carers without delay.
- Where a student attends a college or alternative provision the parent/carer must inform that institution of the absence, in addition to informing the school.
- On a student's return to school following an absence, a written note or a doctor's note on the student should be provided.
- The Headteacher reserves the right to ask for medical evidence before making a decision as to whether to authorise the absence. This must be presented within one week of the last day of absence.
- Data on attendance will be shared with parents/carers and students regularly and discussed at Parent and Carer Consultation meetings.
- Parents/carers who do not give an acceptable reason for the absence of their child must understand that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- If children have medical appointments parents/carers must supply appointment cards.
- Term time holidays are not allowed in line with government guidance. Any holiday taken in term time will be unauthorised.
- Parents/carers should note the dates of both national (usually May and June) and internal examination periods. The national dates cannot be changed for any reason. Staff will publish examination dates as soon as they are known.
- The journey to school for some students may involve the use of one or more forms of public transport. Parents/carers must ensure that their child leaves in plenty of time to allow for possible delay. Some students may qualify for assistance with the cost of transport. The decision as to route and type of transport rests with Passenger Transport and application should be made at the earliest opportunity in order that no education will be missed before the relevant pass is issued.
- Parents/carers must ensure that students attend on the first school day following initial interview. The interview is followed by a short induction period.
- Parents/carers must sign the Home/School Partnership Agreement. This states the responsibility of the parent/carer and student to ensuring that expectations relating to attendance are met.
- Parents/carers must commit to ensuring that students attend on a full-time basis unless medical evidence proves that this is not possible.

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## Students

Students are expected to be responsible and independent. Except where there are exceptional circumstances, they are personally responsible for maintaining good attendance.

This applies to attendance to lessons. Arriving in school and not attending lessons does not constitute good attendance. Good attendance also means good punctuality.

- All students will be provided with a timetable showing clearly their own lesson schedule.
- Students must attend all lessons on their timetables, including all lessons with alternative providers.
- Students are expected to attend punctually every day.
- Students will not leave the school site without permission from staff.

## Teachers

- Teachers record attendance to each lesson.
- Teachers report absence from lessons to senior staff.
- Teachers report lesson attendance to parents/carers through the school's report.
- Teachers may arrange for students to attend additional lessons in a subject in order to ensure students keep up with their learning.

## Tutors

- Tutors meet frequently with tutees to discuss progress and attendance.
- Tutors keep parents/carers informed of attendance where there is concern.
- Tutors set attendance targets for tutees.
- Tutors report absence patterns to senior staff.

## HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

In line with Government guidelines all holidays will be unauthorised. If there are exceptional circumstances parents/carers should write to the Head Teacher giving all information and supporting documents. Unauthorised holidays may incur a Penalty Notice

## Absence Management

Warren Primary School is required to make a decision about individual absences as to whether they should be 'Authorised' or 'Unauthorised'. The decision is an important one because where there is excessive unauthorised absence a penalty notice or a prosecution can be brought against the parents in the Magistrate's Court. If parents/carers are convicted, they will receive a criminal record, a fine of up to a maximum of £2,500 per parent/carer per child and or 3 months imprisonment. For further information please use the link below: [Thurrock Council - Penalty Notices: unauthorised absence from school.](#)

## Punctuality Management

- Persistently late - 2 late consistently within a 3-week period, parents/carers will be sent a letter to inform
- Late after registration can lead to fines or prosecutions.

## **Appendix B – Attendance Procedures**

### Timing of the School Day

#### **Reception and KS1**

8.35 am Gate open - doors open 8.40 am

8.45 am School door closes, any pupil arriving after this time will be recorded as a late (L Code)

9.05 am Register close, any pupil arriving after this time will be recorded as late after registration (U Code)

3.15 pm End of the school day

#### **KS2**

8.35 am Gate open – doors open 8.45 am

8.50 am – doors close, any pupil arriving after this time will be recorded as a late (L code)

9.10 am Register close, any pupil arriving after this time will be recorded as late after registration (U code)

3.20 PM End of the school day

#### **Key Academy staff and contact details:**

Telephone/out of hours contact/Email: 01375 482288, [admin.WPS@osborne.coop](mailto:admin.WPS@osborne.coop)

Responsibility for Attendance: Stephanie Knight (Attendance Officer), 01375 482288, [admin.WPS@osborne.coop](mailto:admin.WPS@osborne.coop)

Trust Education Welfare Officer: Julia Oakley, 07436 334501, [j.oakley@osborne.coop](mailto:j.oakley@osborne.coop)

Strategic Lead for attendance: Vashti Green/ Charlie Evans, Headteacher, 01375 482288,

