



Attendance Policy



Document History

Version	Comments/Amendments	Name	Date
1	First Issue	Chris Kelly	22/04/2025

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1. Introduction

Oaktree Education Services recognises the critical link between consistent attendance and student success. We are committed to supporting all learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), to attend regularly and fully engage with their education. At the same time, we are mindful that poor attendance may signal deeper issues, including trauma, anxiety or stress.

We therefore adopt a trauma-informed approach that places student wellbeing at the heart of our practice. We work in partnership with students, parents and carers to understand the reasons behind attendance patterns, offering compassionate support without compromising our safeguarding responsibilities.

2. Aims

- Promote and maintain high levels of student attendance and punctuality
- Identify and support students at risk of persistent absence
- Foster open communication between college, students, and families
- Ensure safeguarding remains central in all attendance-related processes
- Meet all statutory requirements set out by the DfE and monitored by Ofsted

3. Policy Principles

- Every student has a right to access the education they are entitled to
- Attendance issues are often indicative of underlying barriers, including trauma, anxiety, or external circumstances
- Persistent non-attendance may signal a safeguarding concern and will be addressed as such
- Our processes reflect both the duty to safeguard and the need to work supportively and collaboratively with families

4. Attendance Expectations

- All students are expected to attend all elements of their study programme unless there are valid reasons for absence
- Students with an EHCP are expected to attend in accordance with their planned provision and needs
- Attendance will be monitored and reviewed on a weekly basis

5. Recording and Monitoring Attendance

- Attendance registers will be taken at the start of each session using DfE-approved codes
- All attendance records are retained for a minimum of three years
- Students arriving after the register closes will be recorded as absent for that session
- Absences will be classified as either authorised or unauthorised in line with DfE guidance

6. Absence Procedure

6.1. Planned Absences

- Students or parents/carers must notify the college in advance of medical appointments or other foreseeable absences
- All requests for term-time leave will be considered individually and must demonstrate exceptional circumstances

6.2. Unplanned Absences

- Parents/carers (or students aged 18+) should inform the college by 9am on the first day of absence
- Absences longer than three days require further contact to discuss support and expected return

6.3. Persistent or Concerning Absence

Where a student is persistently absent or a pattern of concern is identified:

1. First instance: Phone call home to discuss the reason and offer support
2. Second instance: Attempt contact with the student directly, where appropriate
3. Third instance: Face-to-face meeting arranged at a suitable location to discuss barriers and create a support plan

If concerns persist, we will:

- Involve relevant services such as education welfare officers, social care, or health professionals
- Trigger safeguarding procedures as appropriate

7. Trauma-Informed and Safeguarding Approach

We understand that for some students, attendance difficulties may stem from trauma, anxiety, or adverse experiences. Staff are trained to recognise these signs and respond appropriately. We aim to:

- Listen to students and understand their experiences
- Provide flexible support and reasonable adjustments
- Work collaboratively with families and professionals to re-engage students

However, safeguarding remains a top priority. Where persistent absence creates risk or concern, the college will act in accordance with safeguarding policy and procedures.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Leadership Team

- Monitor overall attendance trends and compliance
- Support interventions and reviews

Designated Attendance Lead

- Analyse data weekly to identify patterns
- Liaise with families and external professionals
- Escalate cases that may require safeguarding response

Tutors and Teachers

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- Take registers promptly and accurately
- Report concerns to the Attendance Lead
- Engage with students about attendance in a supportive manner

Admin Staff

- Record reported absences
- Generate attendance reports
- Ensure communication is maintained with families

9. Recognition and Rewards

- We celebrate outstanding attendance and progress through termly recognition and rewards
- Most improved attendance is equally recognised to encourage sustained effort

10. Legal and Policy Framework

This policy aligns with:

- DfE Guidance on School Attendance (most recent version)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- SEND Code of Practice
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework

11. Policy Review

- This policy will be reviewed **annually** (or sooner, if required by legislative changes or significant developments in best practice).
- The review process will involve **teaching staff, support staff, senior leaders, and governors**, alongside student representatives (where appropriate).

Approval and Signature

- **Principle of Head of College:**
Chris Kelly, 22/04/2025
- **Chair of Governors/Trust Board:**
Name, Signature, Date