

Ormiston Academies Trust

Ormiston Meridian Academy Attendance policy

Policy version control

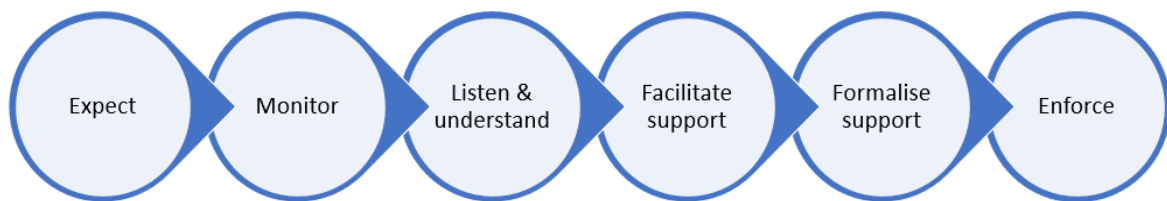
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1. Policy statement

- 1.1. Improving attendance is everyone’s business. Every child of compulsory academy age is entitled, by law, to receive full time education and it is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child attends school. Attending school regularly is not only essential for them to achieve well in their learning but it also helps them with their social and emotional development and overall well-being. Attending school regularly gives children the best opportunity to have wider and better life chances.
- 1.2. The academy recognises that some children find it harder than others to attend school. The academy will always seek to work in partnership with parents to understand any barriers to attendance and provide support to address these. Small dips in attendance can lead to more significant attendance difficulties that are harder to overcome. Therefore, the academy will always intervene early to understand the needs of children and families and put the right support in place as soon as attendance falls below the expected standard.
- 1.3. The academy will **expect** high standards of attendance, **monitor** attendance data, **listen** to children and parents to **understand** barriers, provide **support**, formalising it when necessary, and **enforce** attendance through statutory intervention, only when all other avenues have been exhausted.



2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1. This policy meets the requirements of the Department for Education’s (DfE) statutory guidance on attendance: [Working Together to Improve School Attendance](#). Links to other relevant legislation and guidance can be found at Section 20.
- 2.2. A child must start full time education once they reach **compulsory school age**. This is on the 31st December, 31st March or 31st August following their fifth birthday – whichever comes first. A child can leave full time education on the last Friday in June if they will be 16 by the end of the school summer holidays. They must then do one of the following until they are 18:
 - stay in full-time education, for example at a college.
 - start an apprenticeship or traineeship.
 - spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training

3. Attendance and punctuality expectations

- 3.1. This academy expects children to be in school, on time, every day unless they are too ill to attend or have an authorised absence. Attendance is often reported as a percentage. The following table shows how percentages equate to the number of days and lessons lost each year, how this would be graded and the type of support that would be put in place:

Attendance %	Academy days missed per year	Number of lessons missed per year	Attendance grading	Possible action
100%	0	0	Outstanding	-
98%	4	20	Very good	-
96%	7	25	Good	Academy monitoring
95%	10	50	Almost there	Academy support
94%	11	55	Improvement needed	Academy support
90%	20	100	Concern	External support/referrals
80%	29	145	Serious concern	External support / referrals / penalty notices

- 3.2. When a child arrives late to academy, even by a few minutes, they miss an important part of the academy day, which can include learning time, assemblies and teacher instructions. Children can feel embarrassed at having to enter the classroom late and it can disrupt the learning of others. This table shows how frequent lates can add up to a significant amount of lost learning:

Minutes late per day	Academy days lost per year	Number of lessons lost per year
5 minutes	3	15 lessons
10 minutes	6	30 lessons
15 minutes	9	45 lessons

4. The academy day

4.1. The following table sets out the times of the academy day:

Be on the Line up yards by	8:35am	All students should line up on their designated yard in their form groups. From here they will be escorted into school by their form tutor.
Start of the academy day	8:42am	
Morning register begins at	8:45am	Child receives a 'late' (L) mark if absent when the register starts but arrives before the register closes
Morning register closes	9:15am	Child receives an 'unauthorised absence' (U) mark if they arrive after the register closes
Afternoon register begins at	14:05pm	Child receives a 'late' mark if absent when the register starts but arrives before the register closes
Afternoon register closes	14:35pm	Child receives an 'unauthorised absence' mark if they arrive after the register closes
End of the academy day	15:15pm	

5. Authorised and unauthorised absences

5.1. 'Authorised absence' means that the academy has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from the school or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence. Please see codes below and the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance guidance for more information.)

Authorised absence		
C1	Absent to participate in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised absence
C2	Pupil of compulsory school age is absent due to a parttime timetable agreed by the parent and the school	Authorised absence
C	Absence agreed by the school due to an exceptional circumstance	Authorised absence
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
I	Illness (physical and/or mental health related)	Authorised absence
J1	Absence agreed by the school to attend an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised absence
M	Absence agreed by the school for medical/dental appointment	Authorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	
R	Day set aside for religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave for a public examination	Authorised absence
T	A mobile child (child of no fixed abode) who is travelling with their parent for their trade or business	Authorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Authorised absence
W	Work Experience	Authorised absence
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not timetabled to attend	Authorised absence

5.2. Pupils taken ill during the academy day If a pupil needs to be sent home due to illness, this should be by agreement with an appropriately authorised member of academy staff. In such circumstances, the pupil must be collected from the academy office by a parent/carer or another authorised adult (unless otherwise agreed between the school and the parent/carer) and signed out in the 'signing out' book or electronic equivalent. No pupil will be allowed to leave the academy site without parent/carer confirmation.

5.3. Religious observance

The academy acknowledges the multi-faith nature of the academy community and recognises that religious festivals sometimes fall outside of academy holidays or weekends.

- In accordance with the law, the academy will authorise one day's absence for a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs – this will be marked with the R code. In line with the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance guidance, if necessary, the academy will seek advice from the parent/carer's religious body, about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
- Parents/carers should notify the academy in advance that their child will be absent for religious observance, so that the academy knows whether to expect the pupil into school or not. • If a parent/carer would like their child to be absent for an additional day, around a religious observance, they should contact the academy. The academy will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If additional absence is authorised, this will be marked with the C code.

- The academy will ensure a pupil is not penalised for absence due to days of Religious Observance, for example if using attendance rewards.

5.4. Mobile pupil - parent travelling for occupational purposes

A mobile child is a child of compulsory school age who has no fixed abode and whose parent(s) is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require them to travel from place to place.

- The academy will authorise the absence of a mobile child who is unable to attend school because they are travelling with their parent in the course of their trade or business. This is subject to certain limits, depending on the child's age and number of sessions absent. The school will discuss cases individually with parents as necessary. Parents should let the school know of their plans as far in advance as possible.
- The academy will not unnecessarily ask for proof that a parent is travelling for occupational purposes, this will only happen when there are genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the reason for absence given. If there is doubt, the school may ask for proof that the family are required to travel for occupational purposes during the period of absence.
- To help ensure continuity of education for mobile children, when their parents are travelling for occupational purposes in England, wherever possible it is expected that children should attend a school where their parents is travelling and be dual registered at that school and at this academy, which is their 'main school'.
- The T code, which is an authorised absence, will be used when mobile children are known to be travelling for occupational purposes, but it is not known whether the child is attending another educational provision.
- When their parents are not travelling occupational purposes, mobile children are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly.

5.5. Unauthorised absence is where the academy is not satisfied with the reason given for the absence, or where no reason has been provided. Please see codes below and the DfE's Working together to improve school attendance guidance for more information.)

Unauthorised absence		
G	Holiday not granted by the school.	Unauthorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established.	Unauthorised absence
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances.	Unauthorised absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed (where an authorised absence code does not apply).	Unauthorised absence

5.6. Unauthorised absence includes (but is not limited to) absences due to:

- Reasons which have never been properly explained to the academy
- Arriving at the academy after the register has closed. (Although late arrival for a reason such as a medical appointment will usually be an authorised absence – see section 7 for more information.)
- Birthdays
- Waiting at home for something to be fixed, or a parcel to be delivered

- Parent/carer's or sibling's illness (unless very exceptional circumstances apply and have been agreed in writing by the academy)
 - Day trips, other than those organised by the academy
 - Holidays in term time (unless exceptional circumstances are agreed in writing, in advance, by the academy)
- 5.7. Where the academy has genuine and reasonable doubt about the actual reason for a pupil's absence, staff may seek additional information or evidence from parents/carers regarding the absence, and/or make a home visit to verify the reason. If the reason cannot be verified and the academy has cause to believe the reason given for absence may not be genuine, parents/carers may be asked to provide satisfactory evidence of the reason. If satisfactory evidence is not provided, the school may record the absence as unauthorised.
- 5.8. Unauthorised absences may result in legal intervention, usually penalty notices or prosecutions. See 'Penalty notices, prosecutions and education supervision orders' section for more information.

6. Reporting a child's unplanned absence

- 6.1. If a child is absent, parents must:
- Contact the academy as early as possible, but before 8:30 am, on the first day of absence, either by telephone 01782377100, By sending a message via Schools Synergy Gateway or in person at the main reception.
 - Call every day thereafter to advise the academy of the child's progress.
 - Send a note in on the first day of the child's return with a reason for the absence (even if a telephone explanation has been given) or call into the academy in person and ask to speak with a member of staff.
- 6.2. Absence due to physical or mental illness will be marked as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, the academy will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription or note from a pharmacist, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. The academy will not ask for medical evidence without good reason.
- 6.3. If the academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised, and parents notified of this.

7. Reporting a child's planned absence

- 7.1. Wherever possible, all appointments should be made outside of the academy day. If this is not possible, parents should ensure that children are out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary e.g. if an appointment can only be arranged for 11am, a child should be in the academy both before and after the appointment.
- 7.2. Planned absences for appointments should be reported to the academy as far in advance as possible by sending a message via the schools Synergy gateway or by reporting this to the schools attendance team.

8. Leave of absence during term time

- 8.1. In accordance with the DfE's [Working together to improve school attendance](#), there are very limited circumstances where the academy will grant a leave of absence during term time. These are:
- Taking part in a regulated performance or employment abroad
 - Attending an interview
 - A temporary, time limited part-time timetable (see section 18)
 - **Exceptional circumstances:** the academy may grant a leave of absence for exceptional circumstances at their discretion. This must be requested in advance by a parent who the child normally lives with. The academy will consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the academy to determine the length of time the child can be away from the academy.
- 8.2. The law does not grant parents/carers the automatic right to take their child out of school during term time for holidays or other absence such as trips and visits. The academy will not authorise any leave of absence in term-time unless satisfied the reason for absence is exceptional. The academy will consider each application individually. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the academy's discretion. Parents/carers should not make plans to take their child out of school without making a request to the school first and the school gives permission for the absence. The request should be made by the parent/carer with whom the child normally lives.
- 8.3. Leave of absence will not be granted for a child to take part in protest activity during academy hours.

9. Key contacts for attendance

- 9.1 All academy staff are responsible for monitoring and supporting good attendance. However, the following members of staff provide specific oversight of attendance and/or can provide support to parents and children:

Role	Name	Can support with:	Contact details
Senior Attendance Champion	Robert Hutchinson	All attendance queries	rhutchinson@omera.co.uk
Academy Attendance officer	Sharon Lawton	All attendance queries	slawton1@omera.co.uk
Form tutors			Via main switchboard/reception
Head of years			Via main switchboard/reception
Designated safeguarding lead	Samuel Darlington	All safeguarding queries	Sdarlington@omera.co.uk
SENCO	Angela Wooton	All SEND queries	awooton@omera.co.uk

Senior mental health lead	Angela Wooton	All mental health queries	awooton@omera.co.uk
Pastoral lead	Ann Berrisford	All other queries	aberrisford@omera.co.uk
Family liaison officer			

10. Following up unexplained absence

10.1. Where any child the academy expects to attend does not, or stops attending, without reason, the academy will:

- Call, text or email the child’s parent on the first morning of the first day of unexplained absence to find out the reason. At least two points of contact must be given to the academy for this purpose. If the academy cannot reach any of the child’s emergency contacts, the academy may home visits to complete a safe & well check.
- If after three days of absence the child has not been seen, contact has not been made with the academy and/or the academy are not satisfied with the reason provided for absence, all reasonable enquiries will be made by the academy to establish contact with the parent of the child, including making enquiries to known friends and extended family. In addition, a home visit will be made, by a member of the schools pastoral team to check the safety and wellbeing of the child and to find out the reason for absence.
- Children whom the academy assesses as being at greater risk of harm will receive safe and well checks on each day of absence. If a child has a social worker, the academy will notify them on the same day of any absence.
- Where a child has not returned to the academy for ten days after an authorised absence or is absent without authorisation for twenty consecutive academy days, they are considered to be ‘Children Missing Education (CME)’ (see [Children Missing Education](#)). The child may be removed from the academy admission register when the academy and local authority have failed, after jointly making reasonable enquiries, to establish the whereabouts of the child.

11. Safeguarding

- 11.1. Lack of consistent or regular attendance, erratic attendance or persistent and severe absence or children missing education (CME) are safeguarding issues and must act as a warning sign to a range of possible concerns including neglect, sexual abuse or child criminal exploitation (CCE) and serious violence. They may also be an indication of child-on-child abuse including bullying and sexual harassment or significant mental ill health concerns. They must not be seen as purely isolated attendance concerns.
- 11.2. Where children have or have had a social worker or need safeguarding, this will inform decisions about safeguarding support.

- 11.3. The academy is responsible for the safeguarding of children placed in alternative provision and for monitoring their attendance at alternative provision. This will follow the same process as for children attending the mainstream setting.

12. Promoting and rewarding good attendance

- 12.1 The academy recognises that rewarding good and improved attendance should be carefully considered, to ensure it does not make pupils who have poor attendance, feel marginalised, worried or guilty about their low attendance rate, its impact on the pupil's own learning or the learning or rewards for the class as a whole.

- 12.2. The rewards used to acknowledge good and improved attendance at Ormiston Meridian Academy include:

- Certificates
- Positive messages home
- Vouchers
- Incentive periods/challenges with a prize draw
- In school events (film screening etc)
- Incentive trips
- House points
- Pin badges

- 12.3 The academy promotes good attendance to parents through:

- Assemblies
- Social Media/website
- School Synergy
- Reporting
- Half-termly reporting
- Newsletters
- Promotional events
- Social Media/website

- 12.4 The academy will regularly review any reward systems to ensure they are not negatively impacting on individual pupils or groups of pupils.

13. Attendance monitoring

- 13.1. The academy will use attendance data to identify any patterns of poor attendance so that barriers can be identified at the earliest opportunity and support put in place to prevent any issues worsening.

- 13.2. Weekly attendance will be monitored and analysed to see if there are any patterns or trends in the data that need further investigation and targeted support will be provided. The analysis will be shared with relevant staff e.g. class teachers, form tutors, heads of year, SENCO, designated safeguarding lead (DSL) who will be expected to explore any issues with individual children and provide appropriate support.

- 13.3. The attendance of groups of children (e.g. year groups, boys and girls, children with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)), will be monitored and analysed by the academy at least half termly, termly and annually across the academy. This data will be compared with local, regional and national levels to identify any areas of focus for improvement, and a report shared with the governing body.

14. Reducing persistent and severe absence

- 14.1. Persistent absence (PA) is when a child misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence (SA) is when a child misses 50% or more of school. For both PA and SA, the absence can be for both authorised and unauthorised reasons or a mixture of both.
- 14.2. PA and SA will always be regarded as a significant concern. Absence for whatever reason disadvantages a child by creating gaps in their learning. It also means they miss out on important aspects of social and emotional development that contribute to their overall wellbeing and can be an indication of a safeguarding risk.
- 14.3. The academy will use attendance data to identify those children who are **at risk of becoming PA** and intervene early to identify barriers to good attendance. Strategies may include:
- Letter, calls and meetings to parents
 - Assemblies and 1:1 meetings
 - Working with the TAC/Pastoral team
 - Monitoring reports
 - Identify students as part of the ARAP strategy (Attendance Raising Achievement Programmed)
- 14.4. If a child meets the threshold for **persistent absence**, the academy will work in partnership with parents and the child to agree a voluntary early help plan. This may include referrals to and support from external services. Strategies may include:
- Joint planning to show improvements
 - Time limited reduced timetables to support reintegration
 - Home Liaison support
 - Signposting to support serviced
 - Working with the children families to access to wider support services
 - Formalise support in conjunction with the Local Authority
- 14.5. If a child meets the threshold for **severe absence**, the academy will intensify its support strategies. This will include referrals to and support from external services. Strategies may include:
- Support for families from the Attendance Team which may also include extra support from the, SEN and We Care Teams. This support is offered in conjunction with the Schools Attendance Support Service.
- 14.6. Children who are persistently or severely absent will be prioritised for support. The academy understands that absence is often a symptom of wider issues a family is facing and will always seek to understand these barriers and provide support. Where that is not successful, or is not engaged with, the law protects children's right to an education and provides a range of legal interventions to formalise attendance improvement

- 15.3. If an attendance contract is agreed but the parent does not comply with its contents, the academy and local authority may proceed to an alternative course of action including legally binding interventions and ultimately a prosecution. Again, this will always be a last resort after every attempt has been made to secure engagement.

16. National framework for penalty notices

- 16.1. Penalty notices can be issued to parents as an alternative to prosecution where a child's absence is recorded as unauthorised and that absence(s) constitutes an offence. Penalty notices can only be issued by the Principal, or someone authorised by them, a local authority officer or the police.
- 16.2. While there is a national threshold for when it is appropriate to issue a penalty notice, the academy has a duty to consider each case individually in deciding whether this is an appropriate course of action.
- 16.3. The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks. A school week means any week in which there is at least one school session. This can be met with any combination of unauthorised absence (e.g. 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving late after the register closes all within 10 school weeks). These sessions can be consecutive (e.g. 10 sessions of holiday in one week) or not (e.g. 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks). The period of 10 school weeks can also span different terms or school years (e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).
- 16.4. A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion.
- 16.5. In deciding whether to issue a penalty notice, the academy will consider, on a case-by-case basis, whether this is the best tool to improve attendance or whether alternatives may be more appropriate. They will also consider any obligations under the Equality Act 2010 such as when the child has a disability.

Students attending other educational settings (AP etc)

Parents reporting absence at AP – systems and processes of the school still apply.

17. Supporting children with specific needs

- 17.1. Many children will experience normal but difficult emotions that make them nervous about attending school, such as worries about friendships, schoolwork, examinations or variable moods. It is important to note that these children are still expected to attend school regularly - in many instances, attendance at school may serve to help with the underlying issue as being away from school might exacerbate it, and a prolonged period of absence may heighten anxious feelings about attending in future.
- 17.2. If a child has an education, health and care plan (EHCP), the academy will communicate with the local authority where a child's attendance becomes a concern.

18. Part time timetables

- 18.1. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a child's best interests, there may be a need for the academy to provide a child of compulsory school age with less than full-time education through a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a child from attending school or another setting full-time, and a part-time timetable is used to help the child access as much education as possible and as part of a reintegration package.
- 18.2. A part-time timetable should not be used to manage a child's behaviour.
- 18.3. Part time timetables will be in place for the shortest time necessary and, unless there are exceptional circumstances, last no longer than 6 weeks. Formal written reviews will take place at least fortnightly and will include the child, parents and other professionals as appropriate.
- 18.4. The Principal (or another member of the senior leadership team authorised by them) will agree all part-time timetables. A lead member of staff with responsibility for monitoring the part-time timetable will be agreed, and they will provide information and updates to other relevant members of staff in the academy e.g. SENCO, DSL, pastoral team, as well as liaising closely with parents and the child.
- 18.5. A written agreement/plan between the academy, the child and the parent will be drawn up. It will record the details of the timetable including the proposed end date and responsibilities for safeguarding and review dates. Records of all review meetings will be added to the plan.
- 18.6. Where the child has a social worker, the academy will keep them informed and involved in the process.
- 18.7. If the child has an EHCP, the academy will discuss the part time timetable with the local authority so that any support package that is in place can be reviewed as swiftly as possible.

19. Roles and responsibilities

- 19.1. The trustees and governors are responsible for:
 - Promoting the importance of school attendance across the trust and academy policies and ethos
 - Making sure academy leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
 - Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
 - Monitoring attendance figures for the whole trust and academy
 - Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
 - Holding the principal to account for the implementation of this policy
- 19.2. The principal is responsible for:
 - Implementation of this policy at the academy
 - Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
 - Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual children
 - Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
 - Issuing penalty notices, where necessary

19.3. The senior attendance champion is responsible for:

- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence
- Using absence data to track and monitor whole school attendance and identify children or cohorts that require support
- Devising strategies to address poor attendance and remove any barriers
- Building relationship with parents and external agencies to discuss and address attendance issues
- Creating intervention and reintegration plans in partnership with children, parents and external agencies
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to children and families

19.4. The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Completing the daily attendance register
- Carrying out first day calls and subsequent daily absence calls
- Co-ordinating safe and well checks and home visits
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data against local, regional and national data to identify areas of focus for improvements
- Providing regular attendance reports to academy staff and reporting concerns to the senior attendance champion and principal
- Working with the local authority to address persistent or severe absence
- Advising the principal or other authorised leader when to issue penalty notices

19.5. Class teachers/form tutors are responsible for:

- Recording attendance accurately on a lesson by lesson basis
- Recording attendance on a daily basis in a timely manner
- Regularly reviewing attendance data and implementing any agreed strategies when there is a concern

19.6. Attendance Admin/office staff are responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a daily basis and recording it on the academy system
- Transferring calls from parents to an appropriate member of staff who can provide them with more detailed support on attendance

19.7. Parents are responsible for:

- Making sure their child attends the academy every day on time
- Calling the academy to report their child's absence before 8:30am on the day of absence and each subsequent day of absence
- Providing the academy with at least 2 emergency contact numbers for their child
- Ensuring that, wherever possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the academy day
- Only requesting a leave of absence in advance and only for exceptional circumstances

- If appropriate, inform and work with the academy to address any issues with attendance at the earliest opportunity

19.8. Children are responsible for:

- Attend school every day, on time, in full school uniform, with their top 10 equipment ready to learn
- Attend every timetabled session on time

20. Additional guidance and legislation

20.1. Relevant legislation

- [The Education Act 1996 and 2002](#)
- [The Children Act 1989](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2004](#)
- [The Education \(Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders\) \(England\) Regulations 2007](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty notices\) \(England\) Regulations 2007, as amended](#)
- [The Education \(Information about individual pupils\) \(England\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Children and Young Persons Act 1933](#) and [1963](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

20.2. Relevant government guidance

- [Children Missing Education](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#) and [Working together to safeguard children \[update to latest versions\]](#)
- [Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [Elective Home Education](#)
- [Alternative provision: statutory guidance for local authorities](#)
- [Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England](#)
- [Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions](#)
- [Arranging education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs](#)
- [Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#)
- [Preventing and tackling bullying](#)
- [Providing remote education](#)

Appendix 1 – Request for leave of absence and Penalty Notice changes from August 2024.

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME

IMPORTANT: Please read the reverse of this form before submitting your application.

The Local Authority and Ormiston Meridian Academy strongly discourages parents/carers from applying for leave of absence during term time. Other than in exceptional circumstances, your leave request must be submitted at least four weeks before the proposed absence. The Principal will then consider any requests that have been made for exceptional circumstances.

I wish to apply for leave of absence from school for my child/ children:

Name of child: _____ Form: _____

Name of child: _____ Form: _____

Name of child: _____ Form: _____

First day of requested leave: ____/____/____ Last day: ____/____/____

Number of school days absent: _____

Exceptional circumstances leading to the request:

THIS SECTION MUST BE COMPLETED

Signed (parent/carer): _____ Date: _____

PLEASE RETURN TO RECEPTION.

For office use:

Date application received: _____

Authorised / Unauthorised

Child/children's current attendance: _____% Date letter sent to parents/carer: _____

Signed by Principal: _____ Mrs C. Stanyer

Guidance Notes for Parents/Carers

1. The form overleaf should be completed and sent to the Academy Principal **four weeks before the requested period of absence**. Principals cannot authorise any leave of absence unless the request is received before the period of absence begins. Schools cannot give retrospective approval.
2. The Department for Education makes it clear that Principals cannot grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.
3. There is no automatic right to any leave during term time.
4. The Academy understands the challenge that some parents face when booking holidays particularly during school holidays. However, we believe that in order to make sure that our students receive the best education and prospects they should be in school during term time.
5. Each request will be considered individually and on its own merit. The Academy will consider:
 - The exceptional circumstances leading to the request.
 - The student's current attendance.
 - The potential impact on the student's progress within school.
 - Parents/Carers will need to provide any evidence to support a claim for an authorised leave of absence, all evidence should be submitted with this request.
6. The Principal (or an authorised deputy or assistant principal) has absolute discretion regarding whether or not a child's absence from school is to be permitted during term time and if so, the period of absence to be permitted.
7. If your request is not authorised and you still decide to take your child/children out of school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Any leave taken which is recorded as unauthorised absence may be referred by the Principal to the Local Authority and the following actions may be applied, per parent/carer, per child:
 - A Penalty Notice payable of **a £80 or £160 fine**.
 - Prosecution under s444(1) Education Act 1996, where if convicted you may be fined up to **£1,000**.
8. You will be notified in writing of the Principal's decision to authorise or decline your leave request.

School Penalty Notices for Attendance are Changing from August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into effect for all those issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice are issued to each parent, for each absent child.

For Example: 2 siblings absent for leave during term time would result in each parent receiving 2 separate Penalty Notices.

Third Offence

(Within 3 years)

The third time a Penalty Notice is issued for leave in Term Time or irregular attendance, the case will be presented to the Magistrates Court, where fines of up to £2500 per parent, per child can be imposed.

Note: Cases found guilty in Magistrates Court can show on Parents future DBS certificates as a 'Failure to safeguard a child's education'.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Irregular Attendance or leave in Term Time the amount will be £160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

This is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

10 sessions of Unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notices will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of Unauthorised absence in a 10-school week period.

These Absences can be late after register closes, Unauthorised Absences and Unauthorised Term Time leave absences. They can also be a combination of any of the above.

Second Offence

(Within 3 Years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Irregular Attendance or leave in Term Time the amount will be **£160 per parent, per child** when paid within 28 days.

Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority on the instruction from the School/Academy, in line with the Department for Education legislation. Once issued these cannot be withdrawn.