



Attendance Local Procedure

Policy author:

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1. Introduction

Oliver House School provides a highly personalised and inclusive educational experience for children and young people aged 6 to 19 with autism spectrum condition and associated needs. Through effective teaching, therapeutic support, and carefully adapted learning opportunities, our skilled staff team empowers pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding, confidence, communication skills, and independence needed for successful adult lives.

Our vision is to enable every pupil to achieve their individual potential within a safe, nurturing, and structured environment where they feel understood, valued, and respected.

Pupils follow personalised learning pathways based on their individual needs, Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes, communication abilities, sensory profiles, and academic potential. Class groups are small to ensure high levels of support and individualised teaching. Pupils engage in a meaningful curriculum that combines academic learning, life skills, communication development, preparation for adulthood, and therapeutic interventions.

A fully integrated therapeutic approach, including support from specialist professionals, is embedded throughout the curriculum. Self-regulation, emotional wellbeing, resilience, and independence are fostered across all aspects of school life.

Regular attendance is recognised as fundamental to pupil progress, wellbeing, safeguarding, and successful outcomes. Oliver House School works collaboratively with pupils, families, local authorities, and external professionals to promote positive attendance and remove barriers that may affect engagement in education.

2. Aims

The aims of this procedure are:

- To ensure attendance is promoted consistently across the school and that all pupils can access a personalised, inclusive, and ambitious curriculum.
- To enable pupils to overcome barriers to attendance through effective support, reasonable adjustments, and collaborative working with families and professionals.
- To recognise and respond to the individual needs of pupils with autism and associated needs, ensuring appropriate support is in place to facilitate successful school attendance.
- To promote pupils' intellectual, moral, physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and creative development while fostering respect for British Values.
- To oppose racism, prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination, and all forms of inequality in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- To create a culture where attendance is valued and where pupils, families, staff, and external agencies work together to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- To ensure pupil voice, parent and carer contributions, and professional expertise are considered when developing plans to improve attendance.

3. Context

This local procedure has been developed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, which protects individuals from discrimination and harassment based upon protected characteristics, including:

- Disability
- Gender reassignment

- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age

Oliver House School is committed to equality of opportunity and seeks to provide excellence for all pupils through an inclusive and supportive learning environment. We recognise that many pupils experience significant barriers to attendance, including:

- Autism spectrum condition
- Anxiety and emotional regulation difficulties
- Complex communication needs
- Sensory processing differences
- Mental health needs
- Medical conditions
- Social care involvement
- Transport challenges

In line with the Department for Education guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance, Oliver House School recognises that all pupils have a right to education and that attendance expectations should be ambitious for every child. However, we also acknowledge that some pupils require additional support and reasonable adjustments to access education successfully.

The school applies the following principles:

- Commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
- Respect for individual needs and circumstances.
- High aspirations and expectations for every pupil.
- Partnership working with families, local authorities, and external agencies.
- Maintenance of an inclusive culture where diversity is valued and celebrated.
- Integration of attendance considerations into school planning, decision-making, and safeguarding practices.

4. Leadership, Management and Governance

- All Oliver House School policies reflect our commitment to equality, inclusion, safeguarding, and high attendance expectations.
- The Proprietor, Senior Leadership Team, and Governors establish a culture which values attendance, inclusion, and positive outcomes for all pupils.
- Oliver House School promotes positive and proactive approaches to supporting attendance and reducing barriers to engagement.
- Senior leaders work collaboratively with parents, carers, local authorities, health professionals, social care teams, and other agencies where attendance concerns arise.
- Curriculum delivery and pastoral provision are regularly reviewed to ensure pupils remain engaged, supported, and appropriately challenged.

- Oliver House School maintains an accessibility plan and continually reviews the environment, curriculum, resources, and support arrangements to ensure equal access for all pupils.

5. Principles

The following principles underpin this procedure:

- Regular school attendance is essential in enabling pupils to achieve academically, develop socially and emotionally, and prepare for adulthood.
- Improving attendance is everyone's responsibility.
- Attendance should be promoted through positive relationships and supportive interventions rather than punitive approaches.
- Every pupil should be supported to attend school regularly and punctually.
- Attendance difficulties should be identified and addressed as early as possible.
- Attendance procedures should work alongside safeguarding, behaviour, wellbeing, SEND, and pastoral support systems.
- The school recognises that some pupils may require individual attendance support plans due to complex needs or exceptional circumstances.

6. School Responsibilities

Oliver House School will:

- Provide a calm, safe, nurturing, and structured learning environment where pupils feel secure and ready to learn.
- Promote positive attendance through high-quality teaching, engaging learning opportunities, and strong home-school partnerships.
- Recognise and celebrate positive attendance and improved engagement.
- Work closely with parents, carers, transport providers, local authorities, health professionals, and social care services to address attendance concerns.
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of unexplained absence.
- Monitor attendance patterns regularly and identify concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- Implement attendance support plans where attendance falls below expected levels.
- Consider reasonable adjustments and individual circumstances when developing attendance interventions.
- Ensure attendance information is reported and monitored through leadership and governance processes.
- Maintain accurate attendance records in accordance with Department for Education requirements.

Attendance data will be regularly analysed to identify trends, patterns, and barriers whilst taking account of pupils' individual needs and circumstances.

7. Parent and Carer Responsibilities

Parents and carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually whenever they are able.
- Notify the school as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.
- Provide reasons for absences and relevant evidence where requested.
- Inform the school of any circumstances that may affect attendance.

- Attend meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns.
- Work collaboratively with the school and external professionals to improve attendance where required.
- Avoid arranging holidays during term time unless exceptional circumstances apply.
- Ensure emergency contact information is kept up to date and that at least two emergency contacts are available.

Oliver House School recognises the challenges some families may experience and will seek to work supportively and collaboratively to improve attendance wherever possible.

8. Attendance Registers

Oliver House School maintains statutory attendance registers in accordance with Department for Education regulations.

Attendance is recorded and monitored using the school's Management Information System (MIS).

Registers are completed using authorised attendance codes in line with DfE guidance.

9. Persistent and Unexplained Absence

Oliver House School identifies persistent absence as attendance below 90%.

Where attendance becomes a concern:

- Attendance patterns will be reviewed.
- The reasons for absence will be explored.
- Supportive interventions will be implemented.
- Meetings with families may be arranged.
- Referrals to external agencies may be made where appropriate.
- Attendance support plans may be developed and reviewed regularly.

Any unexplained absence will be investigated by the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Attendance Lead in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

10. Requests for Leave of Absence

Requests for leave of absence must:

- Be submitted in writing by the parent or carer.
- Be made wherever possible at least 14 days in advance.
- Clearly outline the exceptional circumstances supporting the request.

The Headteacher will determine whether leave can be authorised in accordance with current legislation and Department for Education guidance.

11. Attendance Enforcement

Oliver House School will work proactively with families to improve attendance through supportive and collaborative interventions.

Where attendance remains a concern despite support and intervention, the school may refer matters to the relevant Local Authority, who may consider further action in accordance with statutory attendance procedures.

12. School-Specific Procedures

Parents and carers will be contacted where a pupil is absent and the reason for absence has not been communicated.

Attendance is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

Where attendance falls below expected levels:

- Parents and carers may be invited to attend an attendance meeting.
- Attendance support plans may be implemented.
- Multi-agency meetings may be arranged where appropriate.
- Additional pastoral or therapeutic support may be considered.

The school day operates between designated start and finish times and attendance registers close within statutory timescales.

The school recognises that some absences may arise from medical appointments, therapeutic interventions, or the needs associated with pupils' EHCPs and individual circumstances.

All staff have a responsibility to promote, encourage, and support good attendance.

Safeguarding

This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, pupils, parents/carers, visitors and volunteers to share this commitment. A safer setting starts with safe individuals.