



Attendance Policy

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Odyssey Collaborative Trust Attendance Policy 2026

1. Introduction

Odyssey Collaborative Trust believes that every child has the right to access a full-time education that enables them to thrive academically, socially and emotionally. Regular school attendance is essential to achieving this and is a key priority across all Trust schools.

Our vision, *Our Children Thrive, Our Colleagues Thrive, Our Community Thrives*, underpins our approach to attendance. We are committed to creating a culture in which attendance is valued, barriers to attendance are identified and addressed early, and pupils feel safe, welcomed and supported to attend school every day.

The Trust adopts the principles set out in *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*:

- Expect
- Monitor
- Listen and Understand
- Facilitate Support
- Formalise Support
- Enforce

Attendance concerns are addressed through a graduated response which prioritises early intervention, partnership with families and removal of barriers to attendance. Where appropriate, schools will work with external agencies and local authorities to secure improved attendance and fulfil their statutory duties.

The Trust recognises the strong links between attendance, safeguarding, wellbeing and educational outcomes. Patterns of absence may indicate that a child requires additional support and attendance will therefore be considered as part of wider safeguarding and inclusion processes.

The aims of this policy are to:

- promote excellent attendance and punctuality
- ensure every pupil can access their full educational entitlement
- establish a culture where attendance is valued and expected
- identify and address barriers to attendance at the earliest opportunity
- work in partnership with pupils, parents and carers to improve attendance
- provide appropriate support before considering formal intervention
- reduce persistent and severe absence
- support vulnerable pupils and those facing additional barriers to attendance
- fulfil statutory attendance, safeguarding and inclusion responsibilities

This policy should be read alongside:

- Odyssey Collaborative Trust Attendance Handbook
- Odyssey Collaborative Trust Part-Time Timetable Guidance
- Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy

- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Children Missing Education Procedures
- Local Authority attendance guidance

The Attendance Handbook provides the operational procedures, attendance pathways and intervention processes that support implementation of this policy across all schools within the Trust.

2. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2026)
- Relevant Local Authority attendance procedures and codes of conduct

All Trust schools will fulfil their statutory duties relating to attendance, safeguarding, pupil registration, children missing education, leave of absence, attendance support and legal intervention.

Schools will also comply with local authority requirements relating to attendance monitoring, penalty notices, elective home education, children missing education and part-time timetables.

3. Scope of this Policy

This policy applies to all schools within Odyssey Collaborative Trust and all pupils registered at a Trust school.

The policy establishes the Trust's approach to attendance and provides a consistent framework for promoting regular attendance, identifying and addressing barriers to attendance, and fulfilling statutory attendance responsibilities.

All Trust schools are expected to:

- implement this policy consistently
- promote high levels of attendance and punctuality
- fulfil statutory attendance duties
- work proactively with pupils, families and external agencies to support attendance
- maintain accurate attendance records
- monitor attendance effectively and intervene at the earliest opportunity where concerns arise

Whilst providing a consistent Trust-wide framework, schools are responsible for publishing local attendance arrangements which reflect their individual context.

Schools should publish the following information within this policy or on their website:

- attendance contact details
- school day and registration times
- absence reporting procedures
- punctuality procedures
- leave of absence application arrangements

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. The Trust, schools, families and pupils all have a role to play in promoting regular attendance and removing barriers to learning.

Trust Board and Education Committee

The Trust Board and Education Committee are responsible for ensuring attendance remains a strategic priority across the Trust, monitoring attendance performance and holding leaders to account for attendance outcomes.

Local Governing Bodies

Local Governing Bodies are responsible for monitoring attendance within their school and providing appropriate support and challenge to school leaders. This is primarily done through the termly headteacher report.

Headteachers

Headteachers are responsible for implementing this policy, establishing a culture that promotes excellent attendance and ensuring statutory attendance duties are fulfilled.

Attendance Leads (referred to by the DfE as Senior Attendance Champion)

Each school will identify a senior leader with responsibility for attendance. Attendance Leads coordinate attendance support, monitor attendance patterns, work with families and external agencies, and oversee attendance interventions and improvement strategies.

Mrs Nicola Fray is the Attendance Lead for Oakwood Junior School

n.fray@oakwoodj.odysseyct.org.uk

School Office: 01332 571231

Class Teachers

Class teachers promote good attendance, complete attendance registers accurately and contribute to the early identification of attendance concerns.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Designated Safeguarding Leads ensure attendance concerns are considered as part of safeguarding practice and work with attendance leads and external agencies where attendance may indicate vulnerability or risk.

Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school regularly, informing the school of absence and working in partnership with the school to address attendance concerns.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school regularly, arrive on time and engage positively with the support provided by the school.

6. Attendance Procedures

6.1 Attendance Registration

The school will maintain admission and attendance registers in accordance with relevant legislation and statutory guidance. Attendance will be recorded electronically using the attendance and absence codes prescribed by the Department for Education. Registers will be completed at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Any amendments to attendance records will be made in accordance with statutory requirements.

6.2 School Day and Registration Arrangements

School Attendance	Details
Gates open and school start time	8:35am Gates open. 8.45 school starts
Morning Registration taken	8:50am
Morning Register closed	9:20am
Lunch Time Year 3 Afternoon Registration Y3	12:00-12:45pm *PPA day Y4 time 12:45pm
Lunch Time Year 4 Afternoon Registration Y4	12:10-12:55pm *PPA day Year 3 time 12:55pm
Lunch Time Year 5 Afternoon Registration Y5	12:00-12:45pm *PPA day Year 6 time 12:45pm
Lunch Time Year 6 Afternoon Registration Y6	12:30-1:15pm *PPA day Year 5 time 1:15pm
End of School Day	3:15pm

7. Reporting Absence

Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that the school is informed of any absence. Notification should be provided as soon as possible on the first day of absence and include the reason for the absence and the expected date of return where known.

Attendance Contact Information	Details
Attendance Lead at Oakwood Junior School	Nicola Fray
Attendance Email Address	n.fray@oakwoodj.odysseyct.org.uk
School Reception Number	01332 571231

The
school

expects parents and carers to maintain regular communication throughout any period of absence and to provide any information reasonably requested by the school to support attendance monitoring and safeguarding responsibilities.

7.1 Reporting an Absence

- Telephone Contact: 01332 571231 (answer machine for out of hours)
- Email Contact: admin@oakwoodj.odysseyct.org.uk
- Reporting deadline time: Before 9am

If your child's absence is below 97% it will be unauthorised unless there is medical proof. (Children with diagnosed long term medical condition(s) and who are under hospital/consultant care are exempt.)

7.2 Ongoing and Unexplained Absence

Parents and carers are expected to maintain daily communication with the school throughout any period of absence and provide updates regarding their child's circumstances and expected return to school.

The school may request medical evidence where absence is frequent, prolonged, follows a concerning pattern or where there are concerns regarding the reason for absence.

Where a pupil is absent and no reason has been provided, the school will take reasonable steps to establish the reason for absence and ensure appropriate safeguarding action is taken where necessary. This may include first-day contact, home visits and liaison with external agencies.

The school will maintain records of attendance-related communication, support and interventions.

8. Lateness and Punctuality

Regular and punctual attendance is essential to enable pupils to access learning and participate fully in school life.

Pupils are expected to arrive at school on time each day. Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends punctually and is prepared for the school day.

Pupils arriving after the start of the school day will be recorded in accordance with statutory attendance guidance.

8.1 Late Arrival

If pupils and parent/carers arrive after the close of gates at 8:55am then they must report to the main Reception by pressing the buzzer on the outside of the gate on Holbrook Road. The office staff will assist with the signing in process.

8.2 L and U Code

If the gates are shut all persons should enter the school through the main gate on Holbrook Road. The electronic gate will be opened by the office staff after the buzzer on the outside is activated.

All adults and children should report to the main office where the office staff will sign you in.

Children arriving between 8:51 and 9:20am will receive an 'L' code for late arrival.

Children arriving after 9:20am will receive a 'U' code, late arrival after close of register.

The school will monitor patterns of lateness and work with pupils and families to address barriers to punctuality. Persistent lateness may result in additional support, meetings or formal attendance intervention in accordance with this policy and the Odyssey Collaborative Trust Attendance Handbook.

9. Attendance Monitoring and Data

The school will regularly monitor and analyse attendance data to identify patterns, trends and emerging concerns at the earliest opportunity.

Attendance information will be used to:

- identify pupils at risk of poor attendance
- monitor persistent and severe absence
- inform attendance interventions and support
- evaluate the impact of attendance strategies
- support safeguarding and pastoral processes
- fulfil statutory reporting requirements

Attendance will be monitored at individual, group and whole-school level.

Particular attention will be given to pupils and groups who may face additional barriers to attendance, including:

- pupils with SEND
- pupils with an EHCP

- disadvantaged pupils, including those eligible for Pupil Premium
- pupils with a social worker
- looked after and previously looked after children
- pupils with medical needs
- other vulnerable pupils identified by the school

Attendance information will be reported to senior leaders, governors and the Trust as appropriate.

10. Graduated Attendance Support

The school adopts a graduated approach to attendance in line with the principles set out in *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* and the Odyssey Collaborative Trust Attendance Handbook. The aim is to identify attendance concerns early, understand barriers to attendance and provide appropriate support before formal intervention is considered.

Attendance is tracked and monitored over the last 12 month period. Where a child attendance falls lower than 97% medical proof may be sought for authorisation of absence.

Universal Attendance Support

All pupils benefit from universal attendance promotion, support and monitoring. The school promotes high expectations for attendance and punctuality and works proactively with pupils and families to maintain good attendance.

Step 1: Emerging Attendance Concerns

Where attendance begins to decline, the school will make contact with parents and carers to understand any emerging barriers and offer appropriate support. Attendance will be monitored closely to prevent concerns becoming entrenched.

Step 2: Targeted Attendance Support

Where attendance concerns continue, the school may implement targeted support. This may include attendance meetings, agreed strategies, attendance monitoring and signposting to appropriate services.

Step 3: Persistent Absence

A pupil is considered persistently absent where they miss 10% or more of their possible sessions.

Where attendance becomes persistently low, the school will work more closely with pupils, families and external agencies to identify barriers and agree appropriate support. This may include attendance plans, use of the ATTEND Framework, Early Help assessment and involvement from attendance services or other professionals.

Step 4: Formal Support and Intervention

Where attendance does not improve despite support, or where support is not being engaged with, the school may implement formal attendance measures in accordance with local authority procedures and statutory guidance.

This may include formal attendance plans, notices to improve, attendance contracts, referrals to attendance services and other statutory attendance interventions where appropriate.

10.2 Severe Absence

A pupil is considered severely absent where they miss 50% or more of their possible sessions.

The school will prioritise support for severely absent pupils and work alongside families, local authorities and relevant agencies to identify and address barriers to attendance. Attendance concerns at this level will be considered alongside wider safeguarding, SEND, medical and wellbeing information.

10.3 Safeguarding and Multi-Agency Working

The school recognises that persistent and severe absence may be an indicator of unmet need, vulnerability or safeguarding risk. Attendance concerns will therefore be considered as part of wider safeguarding and pastoral processes and, where appropriate, support will be coordinated through multi-agency working.

11. Supporting Pupils Facing Barriers to Attendance

The school maintains high expectations for the attendance of all pupils. Whilst attendance expectations apply to all pupils, some children may require additional support to overcome barriers to regular attendance.

The school will work collaboratively with pupils, parents and carers, and relevant professionals to identify barriers to attendance and provide timely and appropriate support. Support will be personalised, proportionate and informed by the individual needs of the pupil, with the aim of enabling every child to access their full educational entitlement.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school may work with external agencies and professionals to ensure support is coordinated effectively and barriers to attendance are addressed at the earliest opportunity.

For pupils experiencing emotionally based school non-attendance, support will focus on understanding and addressing the underlying causes of non-attendance whilst maintaining the expectation that the pupil remains engaged with education and works towards regular school attendance.

For pupils with medical, mental health or special educational needs, attendance support will be considered alongside any relevant plans, assessments or professional advice.

Support is available from the Trust's legal advisors where necessary.

Alternative Provision

Where a pupil attends alternative provision, the school retains overall responsibility for the pupil's attendance, safeguarding and educational outcomes. The school will work with alternative providers, families and other professionals to monitor attendance, remove barriers to engagement and support reintegration where appropriate.

12. Children Missing Education (CME)

The school recognises that children missing education are at significant risk of underachievement, harm, exploitation and involvement in safeguarding concerns.

The school will work in accordance with statutory guidance, local authority procedures and the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to identify, investigate and respond to concerns regarding pupils who may be missing education.

Where a pupil's whereabouts are unknown, the school will take all reasonable steps to establish contact with the pupil and their family. This may include communication with parents and carers, home visits, liaison with external agencies and notification to the local authority where required.

Further information regarding Children Missing Education procedures can be found in Keeping Children Safe in Education and the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

13. Leave of Absence

There is no entitlement to leave of absence during term time.

The school will consider requests for leave of absence during term time in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and current Department for Education guidance.

13.1 Exceptional Circumstances

The Headteacher may authorise a leave of absence only where satisfied that exceptional circumstances apply. Each request will be considered on its own merits, taking account of the individual circumstances, the reason for the request and the impact on the pupil's education.

13.2 Requesting Leave of Absence

Requests for leave of absence must be submitted in advance.

Leave of Absence forms can be obtained from the school office. These must be submitted before the absence is taken.

The Leave of Absence form is submitted to the Head Teacher who will decide whether it warrants exceptional circumstances approval, in all other cases the absence will be unauthorised.

Parent/carers will be notified of the decision. Please note in the majority of cases the Leave of Absence will be unauthorised.

The school may request additional information or evidence in support of an application.

13.3 Term-Time Holidays

Absence during term time for the purpose of a family holiday will not normally be authorised and is unlikely to constitute exceptional circumstances.

Parents and carers should be aware that making travel arrangements before a decision has been made does not increase the likelihood of leave being authorised.

Where a leave of absence is not authorised, the resulting absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Where the relevant thresholds are met, the school may request that the Local Authority consider legal intervention, including the issue of a Penalty Notice.

13.4 Religious Observance

The school will authorise absence on a day that is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent or carer belongs. Parents and carers should notify the school in advance where possible.

13.5 Part-Time Timetables

All pupils are entitled to a full time education. Where it is considered necessary to implement a part time timetable, this will be arranged in line with the Trust's [Part Time Timetable Guidance](#) and relevant statutory requirements.

Part time timetables will only be used in exceptional circumstances, for the shortest period necessary, and as part of a carefully planned intervention to support a pupil's return to full time education. They will not be used as a behaviour management strategy, an informal exclusion, or a long term response to attendance difficulties.

Pupils on a part time timetable remain on roll and are expected to attend the agreed provision. Parents and carers remain responsible for their child when they are not required to attend school under the agreed arrangement.

All part time timetables will be subject to regular review in accordance with the Trust's Part Time Timetable Guidance. Any absence arising from an agreed part time timetable will be recorded in line with current attendance regulations and statutory guidance.

14. Formal Attendance Support and Legal Intervention

The school is committed to working in partnership with pupils, families and external agencies to remove barriers to attendance and improve outcomes for children.

Where attendance concerns arise, the school will seek to understand the reasons for absence and provide appropriate support. This may include:

- attendance meetings
- attendance plans
- attendance contracts
- use of the ATTEND Framework
- Early Help
- multi-agency working
- referrals to external support services

Where attendance does not improve despite support, or where support is not engaged with, the school will work with the Local Authority to consider formal attendance intervention.

This may include:

- Notices to Improve
- Penalty Notices
- Education Supervision Orders
- Prosecution under relevant legislation

Any formal intervention will be implemented in accordance with statutory guidance, local authority procedures and the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

14.1 Penalty Notices

The school will follow the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the Local Authority Code of Conduct.

A Penalty Notice may be requested where the national threshold for unauthorised absence is met. Parents and carers should be aware that repeated incidents of unauthorised absence may result in escalating enforcement action in accordance with national arrangements.

16. Monitoring and Review

The school will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy through regular review of attendance data, attendance practice and pupil outcomes.

Attendance information will be reviewed by school leaders, governors and the Trust to support continuous improvement and ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner where changes to legislation, statutory guidance or local procedures require.