



Attendance for Learning Policy



At Aspire we recognise the role that attendance has in helping our learners by:

- Promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward learner successes and achievements
- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which learners feel safe, secure and valued
- Providing learners with the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning
- Raising awareness of the importance of excellent attendance
- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently

Aim:

The Attendance for Learning Policy aims to support each learner to aim high and achieve the highest outcomes possible.

Procedures and Practice:

The Aspire Federation Attendance Policy has been written to reflect current laws and latest statutory guidance produced by the DfE, Department for Education, January 2015.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/401467/parental_responsibility_measures_for_school_attendance_and_behaviour.pdf

At Aspire full attendance is promoted whole school, including EYFS at Landgate and both post-16 departments.

The Aspire Federation regularly examines its attendance figures, measuring the impact of policy and practice, and sets attendance targets yearly, reflecting both national and local attendance targets and guidance.

The Federation constantly monitors and reviews its systems for improving attendance to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

Absence

At Aspire the safeguarding of all learners is of utmost importance and is a priority in all we do.

Any learner marked absent at the morning registration period or at the start of the afternoon session must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as 'N' code.

If there is a continued absence of two days without contact from parents then school will action a home visit, if contact cannot be made then a welfare check will be requested to an external service i.e. Social Care, Police. The LA guidance and protocols for Children Missing in Education will be completed and sent to the LA the same day.

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Schools/School-Attendance/Children-Missing-Education.aspx>

Lateness

- Morning registration will take place during Form Time, registers will remain open until the end of Form. Any learner arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation.
- Afternoon registration takes place at the start of the first afternoon session.
- Learners arriving after the start of school/college but before the end of the registration period will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late before registers close.
- Learners who arrive late after the register has closed will be given a late mark ('U' code) for that session.

First Day Absence

- If a child is absent from school/college, for whatever reason it is the responsibility of the parent/carer to inform School by 9.00am on the first day of absence by telephoning Oakfield 01942 776142 or Landgate 01942 776688.
- If the parent/carer does not contact School an identified member of staff will contact the parent/carer before 10am to ascertain the reason for absence (First Day Absence phone call).
- If School is satisfied with the reason provided for the learner's absence it will be recorded in the register as an authorised absence. If no reason is provided or School is not satisfied with the reason given it will be recorded in the register as an unauthorised absence.
- Parents/carers cannot authorise a child's absence from school/college, it is School's decision to authorise absences.

Continued (or sporadic) on-going Absences

- If a child continues to be absent from school/college or has further absences the child's Pastoral Manager will contact parents/carers to discuss concerns.
- If absence continues the child's Pastoral Manager will contact parents/carers to arrange a meeting to ascertain any issues and possible resolutions, this may be in the form of a 'home visit'.
- If the child is in compulsory education the school's Start Well worker will become involved, liaising with the Pastoral Manager to monitor absence.
- If a pattern of absences develops the child's Pastoral Manager will make a referral to School's Learning Support, where strategies will be identified to address the absenteeism.
- Parent/carers will be encouraged to contact School to discuss their child's absence.

Persistent Absence (Defined in legislation as 10% or more absences)

Learners are categorised as being a 'Persistently Absent Pupil' if they accumulate a specified number of absences (or greater) within each half term period. This absence equates to the learner having 10% or more absence in any academic year (DfE guidance September 2015).

For learners whose attendance falls into the 'persistent absence' category, parents/carers will be contacted by the child's Pastoral Manager and invited into school for an 'Attendance Support' meeting. During this meeting an action plan will be compiled with input from the parent/carer, learner, School and Start Well worker. This may lead to the implementation of an Attendance Contract or other appropriate strategy being actioned through the Learning Support programme. Targets will be agreed and reviewed until that child is no longer in the persistent absence category. There will be a focus on links between attendance and attainment.

Following this, if there is no significant improvement in attendance the issues will be brought to the attention of the Head of School. This may result in a meeting being arranged with the Head of School, a School Governor and Start Well worker. Again this meeting would focus on solutions to the problem with a particular focus on the links between attainment and attendance.

Throughout this process, in consultation with the Start Well Service, Education Penalty Notices Warnings will be used where appropriate.

Onward referral to support services (Start Well etc.)

Any learner who is absent without an explanation will be discussed with the school's Start Well worker. The school will record details of the action that they have taken. If necessary a formal referral will be made to the Start Well Service.

Legal Proceedings for Non-Attendance (Wigan local authority guidance)

<https://www.wigan.gov.uk/Resident/Education/Schools/School-Attendance/Legal-Proceedings-for-Non-Attendance.aspx>

How it works

- Wigan LA will write to a parent/carer warning that they may be fined if their child's attendance does not improve in 15 days
- If there is no improvement a parent/carer will receive a £60 Penalty Notice Fine
- If this is not paid within 21 days, the fine increases to £120
- If this is not paid within 28 days Wigan LA can take a parent/carer to court under the Education Act.

There is no right of appeal against a notice, but a parent/carer can contact Wigan LA if they think the notice has been sent to the wrong person, or if they can prove the absence was due to illness.

Defending the charges

If a parent/carer is taken to court, there are only four reasons that they can defend the charges. These are if the child:

- Is ill or couldn't go to school due to an emergency
- Lives over a certain distance and Wigan LA haven't been able to help get them into a school nearer or help with transport
- Misses school due to religious reasons
- Has an authorised absence.

If found guilty

If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they may be:

- Fined up to £2500
- Sentenced to three months in prison
- Given a Parenting Order. This involves going to Parent Support sessions for between six and eight weeks
- The child may also be taken to the Family Proceedings Court.

Holidays in term time

Parent/carers are strongly urged to avoid taking holidays in term time. School will not authorise any holiday in term time.

Guest Learners

All partner schools complete an Inreach school to school agreement. **(Appendix 1)**

Absence notes

Notes received from parents/carers explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there are attendance concerns about the learner, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Attendance Monitoring

Attendance is tracked and monitored by the SLT lead for Attendance, Pastoral Managers and named member of the administrative team. Attendance reports are discussed at Learning Support meetings, where learners with below target attendance are identified and planned action is implemented.

A 'Traffic Light System' is used to identify Learners whose attendance falls below target. **(Appendix 1)**

Promoting attendance

School will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers that it is their responsibility to ensure their child receive a full education.

Parents/carers will regularly be reminded (via newsletters, school website, parents evenings etc.) of the importance of excellent attendance and punctuality.

Every learner will have a copy of The Home/School agreement in their planner.

Attendance Rewards

School will use the following system to reward learners who have excellent attendance;

- Attendance figures are presented weekly during assemblies.
- Attendance trophies are awarded weekly and monthly to the form with the highest attendance during assemblies to promote attendance.
- Attendance figures are displayed on School's television system, website and newsletters.
- Learners with excellent attendance (98%+) are recognised and awarded with certificates half termly
- Students eligible for the 16-19 Bursary must attend College for the specified number of learning hours in order to receive payment.

Attendance Targets

The school sets attendance targets each year. The system for analysing performance towards targets is monitored by the Assistant Headteacher who is responsible for ensuring all relevant information is presented to the Head of School, Headteacher and School Governors.

Other relevant policies to be read in conjunction;

Learning & Teaching, Behaviour for Learning, Safeguarding, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Equality & Diversity.

Date approved:	April 2017
Review Date:	December 2018
Signed Executive Headteacher:	C Taylor

Inreach - School to School Agreement

This agreement is to confirm the terms and conditions for personalised provision at Oakfield High School and College with (name of school)

(Name of learner)
(Number of days)
(Days)

Duration of agreement: (start date) to (end date)

Costs: The cost of the provision will be £30 per student per day and (name of school) will be invoiced in the January of each financial year.

As part of this agreement, Oakfield High School and College agrees to:

- Provide high quality provision;
- Give assessment and progress updates;
- Implement and support planned programmes;
- Provide a comprehensive evaluation of the programme;
- Inform (name of School) of any changes to any programme.
- Hold regular review meetings to discuss progress;
- Should a student be absent Oakfield will inform (name of school) via telephone call to school office by 10am the morning of each absence.

As part of this agreement, (name of school) agrees to:

- Complete a support referral form;
- Ensure all documentation / requested proforma are completed and sent to Outreach Co-ordinator;
- Inform the Outreach Coordinator of any issues, should they arise;
- Keep all records regarding programme for a minimum of 12 months;
- Inform Outreach Co-ordinator if they are aware that a student is not going to be able to attend;
- Notify Outreach Co-ordinator of any changes to the proposed programme;
- Respect the fact that all materials, programmes are the result of a joint venture and as such remain the property of both parties.
- Provide a TA to support the learner at Oakfield at least initially and until told no longer required by Oakfield;
- **Will follow (Name of school) attendance policy when a learner is identified as absent.**

Signed on behalf of Oakfield High School and College

Rebecca Whittaker

Print name Rebecca Whittaker

Position Inclusion/Community Co-ordinator

Date _____

Signed on behalf of (name of school)

Print name _____

Position _____

Date _____

Appendix 2

ATTENDANCE 'Traffic Light System' 2015-16

A 'Traffic Light System' is used to identify Learners/Students whose attendance falls below target.

Category	% Attendance	Possible Actions
GREEN	98% - 100%	- Learner recognised & celebrated in Assembly - Praise-call / text home - Attendance Certificate - Weekly Form Attendance Trophy - Monthly Form Attendance Trophy
AMBER	95% - 98%	- Regular contact home via phone, text, email - Monitoring of absence levels for 2 weeks - As below, if no improvement
RED	Below 94%	- Formal letter home - Referral to Learning Support - Referral to Start Well - Meeting / home visit arranged - Intervention strategies planned to improve attendance

Post 16 Attendance Targets

- Students must complete the required number of Guided Learning Hours for each course undertaken.
- Bursary payments will not be awarded to any qualifying student who is absent unless there are extenuating circumstances, i.e. family funeral, Specialist medical appointment unable to be rescheduled.
- College targets are set in line with school's targets.
- A student's attendance at school will be considered when requesting a college place.