



Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

School Attendance Update September 2024

We recently shared with you information from the Local Authority outlining changes to the attendance guidance which will become statutory after 19 August 2024.

We are committed to supporting our students to attend regularly and in doing so hope that they will have every opportunity to achieve their full potential. Attending school every day is mandatory, except where a student is ill or for a medical appointment.

Considering the upcoming changes please see the below to how term time leave is reviewed and managed in schools.

What we expect from parents;

- Term time leave requests are only submitted for an **exceptional circumstance**.
- Any requests for term time leave should be made in writing to the Academy at least 3 weeks prior to travel.
- A form can be collected from the Academy office and when completed include any documents in support of your request including flight tickets confirming dates of travel.
- If your travel arrangements change and you will not return on the date stated on your form you should ensure the Academy is notified as soon as possible. If the Academy is not notified your child's school place may be at risk. You can notify the Academy of any changes to your travel plans by telephone (01142200400) or email at info@oasisdonvalley.org.
- Holidays are not classed as an exceptional circumstances and parents should consider the impact of this absence on their child/ren's education & minimise the amount of time they will be absent.

What you can expect from the Academy;

- Term time leave will not be authorised unless it is an exceptional circumstance, and the case will be considered on an individual basis (cheaper flights, holidays and high temperatures in countries do not qualify)
- Parents will be notified of the decision regarding authorisation in writing as soon as possible following submission of the request.
- If the period of term time leave is not authorised the Local Authority will be notified and a fine will be issued once the student has returned to the Academy.
- If you do not return to the Academy on the date stated and the Academy has not been notified of a delay your child's school place may be at risk. A referral may be made to the Children Missing in Education team at the Local Authority.

A new National Framework for Attendance Penalty Notices

Any attendance penalty notices issued after the 19 August 2024 will be issued in line with the new regulations. The new Penalty Notice regulations are:

First offence:

- The fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.
- Each parent will be issued a separate penalty notice, for each child who is absent.
For example, 2 parents and 3 children, each parent will receive 3 penalty notices for £160 each, with a family total of £960 in fines.

Second offence:

- The next time an offence occurs, within 3 years of the date the first penalty notice is issued, the fine amount will be £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days, with no reduction.

Third time offence:

- This will be presented to Magistrate's court with no penalty notice issued.

This will include Term Time Leave fines, and Irregular Attendance. Term time leave does not just include holidays. Where a child is absent and it is believed they are absent due to term time leave, schools will be expected to carry out a home visit and see the child on or before the 3rd school day of absence.

For irregular attendance - Where a child has unauthorised absences of 10 sessions or more in any 10-week period, the school must consider escalation to prosecution. Sessions refer to each half a school day, with most schools having 2 sessions each day. The school must consider the reasons for the absence, the support already offered, and the engagement of the parents/carers and young person. These 10 sessions could be made up of term time leave, unauthorised late marks, or unauthorised absence.

If you have any questions regarding the national changes, please speak with our attendance team.

OADV Attendance Team Leads

- Mat Murray – Primary Attendance Champion, senior lead
- Paul Mills – Secondary Attendance Champion, senior lead
- Ellen Bellamy – Attendance and Welfare Officer
- Rebecca Barna – Attendance Support
- Pastoral Managers for phases/year groups

Yours sincerely

Mrs Michels, Head of Primary Phase
Ms Cruise, Head of Secondary Phase