

# Outdoor Learning Centre

## Attendance Policy

**POLICY No. nfs\_gp\_1009**

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### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring we support schools to ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality

### 2. Legislation and Guidance

Although The Outdoor Learning Centre is not a registered school it works to meet the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Student Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

### 3.1 The Director of Education

The Director of Education is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the centre on at least a termly basis. It also holds the Head of Centre to account for the implementation of this policy.

### 3.2 The Head of Centre

The Head of Centre is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring Centre-level absence data and reporting it to Director of Education
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual students
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Communicate with schools who are the named place for the individual student

### 3.3 Admin Staff

Admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the .

They also enter daily attendance data onto the Centers register using approved attendance codes. They will also be responsible for passing on attendance to the named school when absence occurs and give weekly/half-termly register marks.

## 4. Recording attendance

### 4.1 Attendance Register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all students accessing the Centre onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every student is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## 4.2 Unplanned Absence

The student's school/parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Schools/Parents/carers should contact the class tutor OR school office in the first instance.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the student's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

## 4.3 Planned Absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the student's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment and this is passed on to the Centre to record.

Parents/carers should contact the school as well as the Centre to notify of absence.

## 4.4 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend the Centre does not attend, or stops attending, the Centre will:

- Follow up on their absence with their school/parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by phone calls.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

## 4.6 Reporting

Student's attendance data is shared with schools and parents in termly attendance reports. It is also shared during EHCP, LAC and other meetings with parents/professionals.

# 5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

## 5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The Head of Centre can only grant a leave of absence to students during term time with consent from the student's school.

## 5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The Centre monitors closely any persistent absence. Where the school has concerns over persistent absence, we will use a number of options to support schools/students/parents/carers and improve attendance:

- Early communication: phone calls/emails to parents/carers to identify potential issues.
- Planning meetings with schools/parents/carers, pastoral team, SENCO, Senior Leaders as required.
- Home visits by pastoral staff
- Changes to transport arrangements to encourage attendance
- Notifying the local authority (SEN/Social Care) and seeking support.

## 6. Strategies for Promoting Attendance

The Outdoor Learning Centre utilises a number of strategies for promoting attendance such as certificates, rewards and letters home.

## 7. Attendance Monitoring

The Head of Centre will work with the named school for a student to enable close monitoring of attendance.

A student's parent/carer is expected to call the school and the Centre in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health.

If a student's absence goes above 3 days, the Centre will contact the school and parent/carer of the student to discuss the reasons for this.

If a student's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer, the Centre will actively seek advice from the school/LA.

Attendance data for individual students is held on the Centre's MIS (NFS tracker) and up to date data displayed in a range of formats for easy monitoring.

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum yearly by the Head of Centre.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

## Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Student is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Student is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Student arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Student is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Student is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Student has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Student is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Student is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Student is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Student has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances

<b>E</b>	Excluded	Student has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Student has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a student will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Student is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Student is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 student is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Student from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Student is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Student is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for student's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Student arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Student of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend

<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or student is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Student not on admission register	Register set up but student has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day