



Sixth Form
Attendance Policy
2025-26



Oasis Academy Sixth Form South Bank Attendance Guidance

1. Aims

- To ensure that overall Sixth Form attendance is 97% or higher
- To raise the profile of the importance of high-level attendance among students, parents and other staff
- To outline a procedure for monitoring attendance and punctuality and intervention strategies
- To eradicate persistent lateness
- To explain the legal processes for persistent lateness and absence

2. Legislation and guidance

The Department for Education is clear in highlighting the joint responsibility of pupils, parents and schools to establish high levels of attendance. Similarly, guidance outlines the obligation that lies with parents to ensure that students attend school everyday: “Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly”.¹

- Parents (or the person with parental responsibility) are primarily responsible for ensuring that children attend and stay at school.
- Parents/carers should ensure that their children arrive at school on time, correctly dressed and prepared to learn.
- Parents/carers should avoid making non-emergency medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours. Parents/carers must inform the academy and provide medical evidence for any appointments either by medical letter/card/text/email as proof of evidence stating the date and time of the appointment at least 24 hours in advance of the appointment. All students are expected to attend school before and/or after their appointment.
- Authorised absences include illness and emergency treatment during school hours. Unauthorised absences include looking after siblings, caring for a parent, birthdays, shopping, general trips, etc. Only the academy, within the context of the law, can approve or authorise absence – not parents/carers. When a parent/carer has notified us of the reason for a particular absence, the school does not have to accept the explanation as a valid reason for absence. Absence without a valid reason, or where no explanation is offered at all, is recorded as unauthorised absence.
- Parents/carers do not have the right to take their child out of the school during the school day without medical or official documentation.

¹ [Working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#)

- Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time and the school is unable to authorise any holidays taken during the academic year. Any such requests should be submitted to the Headteacher in advance, in writing, for permission to be granted/authorised.

The Academy has a legal obligation to ensure all children are safeguarded effectively. Attendance plays a vital role in this. Department for Education statutory guidance states: “Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues”.² **As such, if a Sixth Form student who is the under the age of 18 is not regularly attending school, this will be treated as a safeguarding concern and potential sign of neglect. The Academy has the legal responsibility to refer young people to the Local Authority under Section 48 of the Children’s Act if a young person is at risk of harm, and student non-attendance will influence this decision by the Academy.**

3. Academy procedures

3.1 Attendance register

In line with Department for Education guidance, Oasis Academy South Bank will take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. The morning register will close at 09:00, meaning any subsequent student arrival will be coded as an unauthorised absence unless there is sufficient reason for this to be authorised.

3.2 Unplanned absence

If a student is absent from the Academy, it is vital that a parent contacts the Academy at the earliest opportunity to provide a reason for absence, and no later than 8am. Student absence should be communicated by emailing office@oasissouthbank.org or phoning 020 7921 4531. At 6th Form, students cannot inform the Academy of non-attendance nor lateness themselves. This must be communicated by parents directly to the Academy.

Absence can only be authorised where there is good cause. If no adequate reason for absence is provided, attendance will be recorded as unauthorised. The decision and authority to authorise an absence lays with the Academy in accordance with The Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1996. Parents cannot authorise absence. Where deemed necessary, the Academy reserves the right to request medical evidence to support absence due to illness. **After five days of authorised absence across the academic year, or three days of consecutive authorised absence, the Academy will unauthorise all subsequent absence.** The process by which the Academy determines authorisation of absence can be found in Appendix A.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

² [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)

It is an expectation that medical and dental appointments are taken out of school time. Missing lessons, even for medical and dental appointments, has a detrimental impact on student progress and achievement.

The academy recognises that it is not always possible to schedule appointments out of school time. In the rare occasion that a student must attend a medical appointment during school time, parents must notify the academy office in advance and provide evidence of the appointment. Patterns of medical and dental appointments during school sessions over a period of time will result in further follow up investigation and action. Regardless of the reason, all medical appointments are recorded as an absence and will impact upon the student's overall attendance percentage.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

It is the Academy's responsibility to provide the best education possible. This can only be achieved if a student attends regularly and punctually. The Academy expects all students to arrive at the academy, registrations and sessions on time. Poor punctuality is not acceptable. A student arriving late will disrupt not only their own continuity of learning but also that of others. Occasional lateness to the academy or lessons will result in a Compulsory Study being issued to the student; patterns of lateness over a period of time will result in further follow up investigation and action.

All 6th Form students should arrive at the academy by 08:20 ready for the lessons to begin at 08:30. Sessions begin at 8.30. The register will close at 09:00, and subsequent student arrivals will be recorded with an unauthorised absence, unless there is valid reason for this to be authorised.

3.5 Following up absence

Parents of a student who is not present in school will be notified of their absence. Parents have the responsibility to inform Oasis Academy South Bank of student absence. It is a safeguarding priority for us to know the whereabouts of all students.

Absences will be followed up through the attendance intervention system, which will include, but is not limited:

- Phone calls to parents/guardians
- Attendance Letters
- Meetings with House Coaches and the Pastoral Team
- Home Visits
- Attendance Trackers
- Attendance Contracts

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

In order to maximise individual achievement, parents should avoid making routine appointments for students during the academy day. Parents should not take family holidays during the term time period.

Parents should be advised that leave of absence can only be authorised at the discretion of the Principal and will only be agreed in very exceptional circumstances. Further information regarding this can be found in the OCL Attendance Policy. On the rare occasion that absences is requested, this should be submitted via the 'Request Planned Absence' form available on the Oasis South Bank website. It should be submitted to reception no later than 7 days before the planned absence.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance is a whole academy initiative. Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility including parents, students and all members of academy staff.

To promote high levels of attendance and to recognise individual and collective high percentage attendance or improvement, the Academy uses a range of rewards and positive reinforcement strategies. These include:

- Regular Check-Ins with students about their attendance rate and importance of attendance.
- Rewards for high levels and improvements in attendance, such as House Points and prizes.
- Recognition of student attendance during assemblies and within Personal Development Time.
- Nomination for wider Sixth Form opportunities.

6. Attendance monitoring

Oasis South Bank Sixth Form has an escalating approach to reinforcing high levels of attendance and intervening in respect of attendance concern.

The principles underpinning the model will be used to promote consistency across all students in Key Stage 5. In summary these are as follows:

- The attendance statistics for every student at the Academy will be reviewed weekly by the Sixth Form leadership team.
- Interventions are allocated where attendance and punctuality are shown to decline over time.
- Where the pattern of attendance is increasingly of concern, further escalation is implemented to re-direct the trajectory of the student's attendance.

In cases that levels of attendance decreases, the Academy will make use of the following escalation guidance:

- 1) **97% - 100%, or increased attendance**- Students in this group are in the best possible position to achieve their full potential in GCSEs, leading to secure their dream job.

Heads of Year and House Coaches will celebrate these students weekly, and the academy will recognise and reinforce their level of attendance.

- 2) **First period of unauthorised absence, below 97%**- Letter 1
- 3) **Second period of unauthorised absence, or Below 94%** - Letter 2
- 4) **Third period of unauthorised absence, below 90%** - Exam Payment
- 5) **Below 80% by Spring Term** – Referral to Social Services

To support this process the Pastoral Team will meet weekly to discuss students whose attendance is declining. A series of actions to support improvement will be agreed, delegated and recorded.

7. Children at Risk of Missing Education

Policies and guidance related to Children at Risk of Missing Education can be found in the OCL Attendance Policy.

The contact for Lambeth CME issues is: inclusion@lambeth.gov.uk

8. Students leaving Oasis South Bank Sixth Form

Oasis South Bank is committed to ensuring that students in Sixth Form complete the full duration of their studies at the Academy. Student retention is tracked, and this is to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to thrive while studying A-Levels. However, at times, it may be in the students' interest to pursue education, training or employment via a different route. This will always be discussed in a transparent manner by leaders in the Academy with students and their wider families.

The Department for Education's Funding Rules for Post-16 Institutions guide the Academy on student withdrawals. This means that: "A student must be considered to have withdrawn from a study programme where they are known to have made a decision to withdraw from the study programme, or to transfer from a full-time to a part-time study programme or from a part-time to a full-time study programme" furthermore, "Institutions must ensure that students are withdrawn from a programme where they have not attended classes for 4 continuous weeks". Valid evidence of return must be provided for a student to remain on the Academy's post-16 roll in the case that a student had not attended for a period of 4 weeks.³

The OASB has a commitment to safeguard students. Therefore, destination of all students who leave the academy will be tracked.

Academy leaders will ensure that detailed records are kept for students who stop attending the academy and are removed from the roll/admissions register.

³ [Advice: funding rules for 16 to 19 provision 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)

Appendix A: The procedure by which the Academy determines unauthorised absence

