

Parents/carers must consider the effect of taking their child out of the academy for holidays which should be taken during academy holidays instead.

Truancy watch

Sandwell operates Truancy Watch every day. An education welfare officer and a police officer travel around Sandwell and, if they see a person whom they believe is of statutory school age out during academy opening hours, they will be stopped whether they are with an adult or not. If a young person is out on their own or in a group, they may be picked up and returned to the academy. The academy and the Local Education Authority will be informed of any young person stopped by Truancy Watch for recording purposes and also to allow further investigation if necessary.



ACADEMY ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

And finally

Your child has the legal—and moral—right to an education to help him or her achieve as much as possible and give them the best start to adult life—but they must be in the academy to benefit from what is being offered and it's your legal responsibility to ensure this.

It is our academy policy that if your child's attendance falls below 90%, unless medical evidence is provided or exceptional circumstances proven, any further absences will be unauthorised.



Check List

- **It is parents/carers responsibility to ensure their child attends their academy**
- **Is your child really ill enough to have to miss lessons?**
- **Make medical or dental appointments outside academy hours if possible.**
- **Holidays should not be taken in term time.**
- **If your child is out of the academy in academy hours, he or she may be stopped by Truancy Watch even if they are with an adult.**
- **If an absence is unavoidable make it for the shortest time possible.**
- **Notify the academy as soon as possible on the first day of any absence.**
- **Give an approximate date of return.**
- **Ensure that your child attends academy on time with any equipment that he or she needs for the day.**
- **Contact the academy on 0121 556 0445 about any problems your child may be having which is affecting their attendance or which is causing other difficulties.**

Academy Attendance MATTERS!

Academy Attendance Matters!

How to ensure your child reaches his or her full potential.

**Senior Attendance Improvement Officer
In partnership with
Ocker Hill Academy**

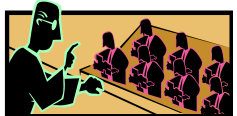
ACADEMY ATTENDANCE MATTERS!

The staff and governors of Ocker Hill Academy are committed to delivering the highest possible standard of education to your child. However he or she cannot benefit from this unless they attend the academy every day they possibly can. It is a fact that high achievement is directly linked to attendance. It doesn't matter whether your child is a high achiever or not—he or she cannot reach his or her full potential unless he or she is in the academy.

The purpose of this leaflet is a reminder of what you as parents or carers need to do to help your child to get as much out of his or her time in the academy as possible and to point out some of the ways that this aim is not always met,

ACADEMY ATTENDANCE MATTERS! The Law

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that it is the responsibility of parents/carers to *ensure* that their child attends the academy at which they are on roll regularly and failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them. Penalty notices can also be issued for poor attendance.



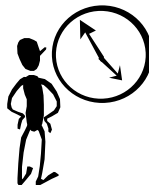
It is much better to encourage good attendance at an early age to minimise problems later. For most pupils it is a routine for them to attend the academy but this is not the case for all children. If you are having problems in getting your child to the academy contact either someone in the academy to arrange for a discussion as soon as possible. There is a lot that can be done to help pupils experiencing problems but the academy needs to know what the problems are and it's better to try to resolve difficulties at an early stage.

Registration

It's essential that your child registers in the academy. Registers are legal documents and are the only evidence that your child is in the academy. It is also important under health and safety—we need to know who is on site during the academy day. It's no good your child saying they were in the academy if they are not registered—there will be no proof and the law believes the register!

Punctuality

Lateness is a problem. Even if your child is only a few minutes late it can add up to a significant amount of time over a long period. If your child is late he or she may miss registration—or disrupt his or her own learning and the learning of others in the class. The academy start time is 8.50 a.m.



ACADEMY ATTENDANCE MATTERS! Absences

There are only 3 reasons for absence which form a "statutory defence" in law. The main one is absence due to illness. It is only the academy which can decide that an absence should be "authorised" i.e accepted as a genuine reason for absence. Minor illness should not automatically result in having time off - is it **really** necessary? If you really think having time off is justified it should be for the shortest possible time—every day matters! It is important that you contact the academy as soon as possible on the first day of absence. The academy operates a first day calling system so, if you don't let the academy know the reason for absence, you will be called. If a pattern of absence starts to form, the senior attendance improvement officer may be asked to make contact with you to discuss the reasons for the absence. This should not be seen as a bad thing, their preference will be to help in resolving the difficulties so that your child can return to the academy but they also have responsibility to assess whether legal action would be appropriate.

This will only be done if there is a reluctance for parents/carers and pupils to co-operate in resolving problems causing poor attendance—the preferred option is *always* to get things sorted out and for attendance to improve.

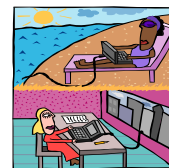
Medical/dental appointments



Where possible, these appointments should always be made out of academy time but, if this is unavoidable, it should not be necessary to miss a whole day.

ACADEMY ATTENDANCE MATTERS Holidays

It is unfortunate that holidays are cheaper in term time and this means that there is a temptation for parents/carers to book their holidays then. However this results in time being missed in the academy which is quite difficult for a pupil to make up. He/she will have to copy up



missed work to allow him or her to keep up with the rest of the class but this is never as good as having the teaching accompanying the work—especially if your child has difficulties understanding the lesson. Many parents believe that they have a right to take their children on holiday for up to ten days in term time—this is not so!

Another problem is that it is not only your child's learning that could be affected but also the rest of the pupils in the class who will have to wait whilst the teacher brings your child up to date which obviously means more work for the teacher. It only takes several children to be away on holiday over a period of time to seriously disrupt the work of the whole class.