

# MY OASIS

Therapeutic Alternative Provision

## Attendance Policy 2024/2025

Date of Last review: June 2024

Date of Next review: June 2025



CHARLOTTE LOWE  
PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD



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[www.my-oasis.uk](http://www.my-oasis.uk)

# Aims

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence amongst students on both short and long-term placements.
  - Ensure every student has access to full-time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address any patterns of absence, providing specialist EBSA support to those who may be becoming persistently absent.
- Support parents and guardians to be able to fulfil their legal duty in ensuring their child(ren) of compulsory school age attends school regularly.
  - Promote and support punctuality.

**Our Service aims to:**

- Maintain the student's academic progress and enable them to return to mainstream Education when it is in their best interest to do so.
- Encourage good attendance by ensuring that students are offered a broad and balanced curriculum to meet all needs and interests, a curriculum which is relevant and approved for each student.
- Ensure all students feel valued within the school community and help them develop confidence and self-esteem

Early intervention and EBSA support will be put in place for those students showing patterns of non-attendance. Therapeutic support can be provided on an outreach basis where needed.

- Achieve our target of 100% attendance for all students.

Students attend with us at My Oasis due to various factors primarily linked to their mental health wellbeing, and/ or any diagnosis of SEND. Students' timetables and the amount of time they spend at My Oasis will therefore vary depending on the needs of the young person.

## Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance and parental responsibility measures.

These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

The Education Act 1996

The Education Act 2002

The Education and Inspections Act 2006

The Education (Student Registration) (England) Regulations 2006

The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010

The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011

The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

The Education (Student Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016

The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the alternative provision census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## Expectations regarding attendance

Regular attendance and good punctuality are crucial factors for students to achieve their full potential and flourish academically, socially and emotionally.

Students' attendance is often very low when they come to us and many have been disengaged in education for some time. One of the outcomes we aim to improve for all students attending My Oasis is therefore

improved attendance by helping them to engage in their learning. We aim for our students to have at least 95% attendance during their placement with us.

Parents/ guardians have a legal obligation to ensure that their child attends regularly, but also have a role in encouraging their child to see the value of education. My Oasis staff can offer support to families with this to help perhaps change any negative perception families hold towards education, which is usually the case if parents/guardians themselves have had bad experiences at school.

## Procedures to support positive attendance

Attendance is one of the topics covered at the planning /referral meeting, keyworker meetings, and review meetings, as this is an outcome we aim to improve for all students.

In line with DfE legislation, My Oasis keeps an attendance register for all students which is taken both in the morning and afternoon. Attendance codes are used in line with those used in mainstream schools to ensure consistency, transparency and ease of use when sharing data.

At the planning/referral meeting, the parents /guardians will be given a My Oasis Information Booklet, our Induction Process and our Code of Conduct which sets out expectations around attendance.

If a student does not attend their placement at My Oasis for a long period of time, the student's placement with us will come to an end.

Daily manual registers are completed by My Oasis staff in both the morning and afternoon. A member of our admin team currently enters attendance information into our online register copy. However, recently we are in the process of setting up an MIS to help us monitor the attendance of students as well as help prove impact in terms of improved attendance rates. Alternative Providers/ external services we work with at My Oasis send attendance twice a day to the Therapeutic Alternative Provision Service administrator if the child is taking part in an external activity. In addition, a weekly composite register can be provided to the Local Authority where required.

Thirty minutes after the designated start of the day the homes of learners who have not arrived will be contacted by phone, unless there has been prior contact. As most students get collected, should a student

not turn up or answer their door then an immediate telephone call will be made to their parents/guardians to help determine what has happened and to find out the reason for the student's non – attendance.

If we have a concern regarding a student's attendance, the parent/guardian may be requested to attend a meeting at My Oasis to discuss this. The purpose of the meeting will be to identify any barriers and explore how best to support a young person to help improve their attendance should this have become a problem for them.

Where students are dually registered, the student's mainstream school are to be notified of a student's attendance on a daily basis through email.

Official registers will be retained for a minimum of three years from the end of the academic year for which they are relevant.

## Unplanned Absence

Parents/ guardians must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence. For example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health parents/guardians must notify My Oasis as soon as practically possible and primarily before their lifts to school have set off. The provision's telephone number, as well as email address, will be provided to parents and guardians in the My Oasis information booklet to ensure they know who to contact to report their child's absence.

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents/ guardians 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 staff at My Oasis are not satisfied with the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/guardians will be notified of this in advance.

## Medical or Dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an unauthorised absence if staff at My Oasis have not been informed, advance notice is required for authorising these absences. However, we encourage parents/guardians to make medical and dental appointments out of the TAP's hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the student should be out of the provision for the minimum amount of time necessary.

## Lateness and Punctuality

A student who arrives late but, before the register has closed, will be marked as late using the appropriate code. A student who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent using the appropriate code.

## Illness

Parents/guardians are expected to notify the school as soon as possible, and preferably before the TAP day starts, that their child will be absent due to illness. Where a student does not register for a morning session and there is no explanation for their absence, the Attendance Officer will contact the parents/guardians to inform them of this and to check their child's welfare.

If an email or telephone message has been received, the parents/guardians are not required to send a further acknowledgement in writing, however the school reserves the right to ask for confirmation in writing at any time. Whilst the parent/guardian may provide a reason for an absence, decisions as to whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised will be made by the school. Emails may be sent to the Attendance Officer directly or the My Oasis landline may also be contacted, as long as you are contacting from an email address or telephone number which has previously been registered with My Oasis on our database.

The Attendance Officer of My Oasis is Andrea Atkinson: [Andrea@my-oasis.uk](mailto:Andrea@my-oasis.uk)

My Oasis Landline: 01257367095

When a child is unwell and absent over a short period (less than a week), the school will assume that they are not well enough to complete work. In this event, teachers will not normally provide work for students to complete but will support them to catch up on their return. However, schoolwork can be provided upon request for individual students where required.

When a child is absent over a longer period due to an illness which is supported by a medical note the school will work with each individual child and their family to arrange work for them as appropriate.

## Following up Absence

My Oasis will follow up on any absences to ascertain the reason and ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. Staff at My Oasis can then identify whether the absence is approved or not, check on a student's welfare and identify the correct attendance code to use.

## Reporting attendance to schools

Daily attendance records are sent to mainstream schools to note the attendance of students at My Oasis

## Reporting to Parents/ Guardians

A student's attendance will be highlighted in any reviews provided, with attendance being one of the main outcomes we aim to improve at My Oasis.

We are currently setting up Arbor MIS to enable us to provide attendance data more consistently to mainstream schools and in line with the computer systems also used in school.

# Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The head of the provision at My Oasis is under no obligation to grant any leave of absence to students during the term unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. These are typically absences that are completely unavoidable.

However, we consider each application for long-term absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head of the provision's discretion.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and Medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the student's parents/guardians belong. If necessary, the TAP will seek advice from the religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart.
- Traveller students travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the TAP but it is not known whether the student is attending educational provision.

## Students falling ill during the school day

When a young person appears to be too physically or emotionally/mentally unwell to be in school we will ask that they be collected by a parent/guardian in order to be either taken home or to seek medical attention.



Should students need to go to Accident and Emergency, staff at My Oasis will either ring for an ambulance or take them to the hospital themselves, if it's safe to do so. Staff will stay with the student until their parents/guardians arrive.

## Requests for Leave of Absence during Term Time

From 1 September 2013, the regulations governing the granting of leaves of absence to students in term time changed. Leaves of absence can now only be granted in "exceptional circumstances".

For the avoidance of doubt, going on holiday during term time does not constitute exceptional circumstances, and a leave of absence during term time will not be granted to parents/guardians for this reason unless there is some other "exceptional reason" for doing so (for example, the holiday is to visit a terminally ill relative who lives in another country). The TAP may, in some circumstances, grant a leave of absence to attend a funeral or wedding of a close relative, namely a parent/guardian, sibling and, in cases where there was regular contact, grandparents.

Parents/guardians should submit requests for a leave of absence to My Oasis at least 15 days before the first date of the proposed absence. Such requests must be in writing and the reason for the leave of absence outlined in detail. The number of days that the student would be absent must also be stated as well as any consequences should the leave of absence not be granted.

Parents/ guardians should not assume that a request for leave of absence will be granted, and no arrangements (for example, travel tickets or accommodation) should be booked before the request has been considered and authorised. The TAP will not accept any responsibility for any losses incurred as a consequence of the refusal of a request. Absence of a student will never be authorised retrospectively, and any such absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

If a request for leave of absence is refused and the student is subsequently absent on any of the days that the request was related to, the TAP will notify the student's mainstream school or the local authority where required. This could result in the issue of a penalty notice to each parent/guardian for each day of the absence for each child. This is also the case if a request is authorised, but the student is absent for longer than agreed.

# Legal Sanctions

Although schools can fine parents/guardians for their child's unauthorised absence from school, when the child is of compulsory school age, this would usually be carried out by the mainstream school in which the student is enrolled. This means that the student's mainstream school would issue penalties rather than My Oasis.

Where student attendance on entry or during the stay in our provision falls below 95% the student's mainstream school will be made aware of this which may lead to possible Penalty Notices being considered and implemented, unless there are clear reasons why this would not be advisable. This is a supportive strategy where parents/ guardians will also be offered access to support and possible parenting sessions if available locally. In addition, individual EBSA support will be offered to students and/or their families where needed.

Details of the amount issued for fines can be found on the mainstream school's website

## Roles and Responsibilities

The Head of the provision and senior leadership team are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the provision for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting this to governors.

All staff on shift at My Oasis could be responsible for taking attendance as this depends on who is picking up students in the morning. The register is then shared with the attendance officer as soon as possible so they can then share it with a student's mainstream school.

This policy is reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

## Links with other policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy