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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Compliance: This policy is written in accordance with and complies with Part 3, paragraph 17 of The Education (Independent School Standards Compliance Record) (England) (Amendment) Regulations and School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, November 2016

“The 1996 Education Act states that it is the parents’ responsibility to ensure that their child receives efficient full time education.”

Options Trent Acres School is an independent day school for pupils aged 8-18 who have complex needs. A high number of our pupils have experienced disruption to previous education and some have not attended school for a considerable amount of time prior to joining the school. A considerable number of our pupils have encountered adverse childhood experiences and trauma. This impacts on their ability for form relationships and engage in routine and structure.

Options Trent Acres School offers a full time education package appropriate to the needs of the students which takes into account the National Curriculum and a wide range of functional, enterprise and vocational experiences. Students are offered accreditation through GCSE, BTEC, Functional Skills ASDAN awards and qualifications. A strong student-centred approach ensures that education, care and clinical support are intrinsically linked. This benefits all students, while regular meetings ensure learning targets remain appropriate.

2.0 GENERAL

Encouraging Good Attendance

Prior to attending Options Trent Acres School, attendance at school for some of our pupils has been disrupted. Some pupils have missed considerable amounts of schooling which has impacted on their ability to build relationships and resulted in low self-confidence and low self-esteem. Following an assessment period, in which a multi-disciplinary team complete assessments to identify if the school can meet needs, the school liaises with the placing authority to offer a place at the school.

Once placement is agreed, the school will work closely with parents and carers to establish an appropriate route into school. Some children may be able to readily access a full time timetable, other pupils may require a transitional plan. This plan is personalised to the needs of the child taking into account key factors including information from the EHCP, additional needs and/or related conditions including trauma and anxiety that may

be school related. We will also take into account the duration of missed learning. A high number of pupils at Options Trent Acres School have not attended school for a considerable amount of time.

Transitional plans are agreed with all stakeholders and are reviewed regularly. From induction into placement, the school places high emphasis on regular attendance for all pupils. This is extremely important where pupils have missed education and have gaps in their knowledge.

Encouraging Good Punctuality

Students are encouraged to attend the School on time to begin the learning day. The ability to be punctual is a life skill and assists students with structure. Good punctuality is a key quality to develop for future education and employment. However, it is important to recognise, due to the particular students educated at Options Trent Acres School and taking into account their Complex Needs that students will have difficulties with routines and at times flexibility in timings needs to be exercised, therefore transition to, from and around the school needs to be carefully planned. The intention is for all sessions to start on time, but at times student's functioning and processing time effects their ability to keep their routines to normal expectations

Where persistent lateness is observed this will be discussed as part of a multidisciplinary team with the aim of supporting students to develop routines to enable good morning routines.

For day students' parents/carers are asked to notify the school if their child is going to be late for any reason, this allows for teachers and their teams to be made aware and this can be factored into planning the students learning for that day.

Attendance is also reported on during 6 weekly Academic Progress reviews.

Students are also awarded Effort Grades on a termly basis and are reported on:

- Grade A Excellent 100% attendance
- Grade B Good 95% to 99%
- Grade C Satisfactory 91% to 94%
- Grade D Unsatisfactory below 90%

3.0 PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING ABSENCE

For day students when a student is absent, it is important that the School is informed. If students do not arrive at the School, staff have no way of knowing where they are or if they are safe. Parents/Carers are provided with information when their child starts school which gives details of our opening times and telephone numbers so that we can be contacted. School term dates are sent out annually.

Parents are asked to:

- Make every effort to contact the Pastoral Manager as soon as possible on the first day of their child's absence.
- If their child is going to be absent for some time, they should ensure the school is regularly updated.
- Ensure their child attends school regularly.

On the first day of absence the school will telephone if the parent/ carer has failed to make contact. In case of illness the parents/ carers should contact us again on the third day. If we are unable to make contact then

a referral may be made immediately to the relevant Social Worker, or where a social worker is not named, then the designated person in the local authorities SEN team.

In exceptional circumstances the Head Teacher can authorise leave of up to ten days in any one school year. Prior notice must be given. If the student stays away from school after this authorised period, the school register will be marked as an unauthorised absence. This will remain on the student's record. In cases of continued absence, the parent should inform the school at the earliest opportunity.

In making the decision whether to grant term-time leave for a student, the Head Teacher will consider:

- The age of the student
- The duration of the leave
- The student's attendance record
- The student's ability
- Previous term-time leave

There are times during a school year when a student may experience particular problems if leave is taken, such as:

- During exams or tests
- During the first year at a new school
- At the beginning of a new term

4.0 ATTENDANCE MONITORING

School attendance is monitored by the Pastoral Manager who is part of the school's leadership team. The Pastoral Manager will work closely with parents to support and encourage good attendance. This involves wider work with the child and families including meetings, home visits and remote support calls. The leadership team meet on a half termly basis to identify pupils who may be in need of additional support to improve their attendance. Pupils with improved attendance are also highlighted and recognised with rewards and certificates.

5.0 THE ADMISSIONS REGISTER

The young person's details need to be entered into the School admissions register and accompanying information filed. The young person will be shown around the school and introduced to the staff and other young people. An individual timetable will be discussed, taking into account of the young person's age, aptitude and ability. Initial assessments will be carried out within the first four weeks from admission and a copy of the results will be discussed at an initial review meeting with the placing authority and parents/carers and team involved in the education and residential settings.

This gives particular information about pupils who are currently registered as attending our school. The register will comprise information that is compliant with regulations set out in the education (pupil registration) (England) regulations 2006, the admission register will contain:

- Name (inc middle names) Surname First
- Date of Birth
- Year Group
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Name and Address of all with PR

- Parent/Carer with whom learner resides
- Emergency Contact Numbers (Social Worker)
- SEN Y/N
- LAC Y/N
- EAL Y/N
- Day/Res
- Pupil Premium
- LA - Funded
- LA - Referred
- Date of Admission
- Previous School
- Leaving Date
- Any Readmission Date to Options Trent Acres School
- Leaving Date Options Trent Acres School
- An indication of boarding/care order or day attendance (external placements)

The register will be printed on an annual basis and retained for a period of 3 years.

5.0 THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

The Attendance Register is maintained in accordance with School attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities (November 2016)
Attendance codes are taken directly from legislation

The School is required to ensure that the attendance register for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day – once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Our School values attendance at school and students who complete 100% attendance each term will be celebrated during the end of term celebration assembly and awarded with a 100% attendance badge. Each pupil must be marked on the register in one of the following categories:

- Present
- Engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site (approved by the Head Teacher and supervised by a person approved by the Head Teacher, including sporting activities, educational visits or residential trips)
- Absent
- Unable to attend through exceptional circumstances (unavoidable closure of the school site or part of it)
- Taking authorised absence (granted leave of absence by the head teacher or a person acting on their behalf, unable to attend by reason of sickness or unavoidable cause, observing a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs)
- Taking unauthorised absence (if no reason is established when the register is taken, the entry may be corrected later when the reason is established).

Definitions

Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent/carer/guardian writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority.

- Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from our school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. The school keeps accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of five years.

This policy is reviewed annually