

Oakfield School

48. WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY



To be Reviewed:	June 2017
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Oakfield School

WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Statement of Policy

Oakfield School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all.

We will endeavor to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome.

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

Parents and Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their child/ren attend school regularly and punctually. They should also ensure that their children are properly equipped and fit for a learning environment.

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills.

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence targets. These will reflect both national and local attendance targets.

The school will review its systems for improving attendance at regular intervals to ensure that it is achieving its set goals.

This policy will contain within it the procedures that the school will use to meet its attendance targets.

Statement of Policy Review

The Governors have agreed that this policy will be reviewed every three years. This review will take into consideration all aspects of applicable legislation and advice current at the time of the review. The next 'Period of Review' will be January 2017.

Responsibilities

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children. Parents should work closely with school staff to overcome any problems which affect a child's attendance.

The school will encourage and value high attendance rates. The school will recognise the external factors which influence pupil attendance and will work in partnership with parents, the Education Welfare Service and other relevant services to deal with any issues. The school will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with students and their parents and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements.

School Procedures

Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised, unauthorised or as an approved educational activity [attendance out of school]. Only the Headteacher or a member of staff acting on their behalf can authorise absence. If there is no known reason for the absence at registration, then the absence must be recorded in the first instance as unauthorised.

Lateness

Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.50 am. The registers will remain open at the start of the school day for 40 minutes. Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e. school transport was delayed. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate authorised absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00pm.
The registers will close at 1.40pm.

Pupils arriving after the registers have closed will be treated for statistical purposes, as present, but will be coded as late.

First Day Absence

Reception staff or attendance officer will contact parents/carers on the first day of absence; if reasons for absence cannot be identified then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. If contact cannot be made then a home visit from our in house attendance officer will take place after this on the second day, then a letter will be sent by post. The Child Protection Coordinator will also be informed.

If pupils do not return after a Fixed Term Exclusion then Reception staff or lead behavior manager will contact the parents/carers to ascertain the reason for non-attendance and the procedure as for First day Absence will be followed.

Ten Day's Absence

Any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days will be notified to the Local Authority, by submitting a referral to the Children's Services Attendance Team. The school will include details of the action that they have taken.

Frequent Absence

It is the responsibility of staff to be aware of and bring attention to, any emerging attendance concerns.

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve the problem with the parents/carers. If this is unsuccessful the school will refer to the School Health Adviser if the problem appears to be a medical one. In other cases the school will seek advice from the school's Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

The EWO will meet regularly with the designated member of the Senior Leadership Team and they will monitor all pupils whose attendance falls below 90%. After discussion to ascertain the reasons for irregular or unsatisfactory attendance and the steps taken, the EWO will make a referral and, if appropriate, make a home visit. This helps to remove any barriers to the pupil achieving full time education through case work, advice, guidance and support to the family and pupil.

The EWO will have access to all registers and attendance data.

A Welcome Back

It is important that on return from an absence that all pupils are made to feel welcome. This should include ensuring that the pupil is helped to catch up on missed work and brought up to date on any information that has been passed to the other pupils.

Absence Notes

Notes received from parents explaining absence should be kept for the remainder of the academic year. If there is an attendance concern about the pupil, that may require further investigation, then the notes may need to be retained for a longer period.

Promoting Attendance

The school will use opportunities as they arise to remind parents/carers, that it is their responsibility to ensure that their children receive their education.

The Home/School agreement can be used in this way.

Holidays in Term Time

Holidays during term time are to be discouraged. Parents will be reminded of the effect that absence can have on a pupil's potential achievement. Absence because of holidays will be unauthorised, unless it is deemed an exceptional case by the Headteacher and Governing Body.

Attendance Targets

The school will set attendance targets each year. A system for analysing performance towards the targets will be established and a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for overseeing this work.

Staff Roles

Staff

- Provide a good example by always being punctual to hubs and lessons.
- Ensure that all notes from parents are passed to the admin office
- Monitor patterns of absence for individuals
- Alert Deputy Head or attendance officer when there is an attendance problem
- Offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality improves.

Senior Leader

- Set Annual school attendance target
- Ensure that school attendance policy is implemented (and regularly reviewed)
- Ensure that the policy is communicated to pupils, staff, parents and Governors;
- Ensure detailed attendance data is regularly collected and used to inform strategic planning on attendance matters.
- Report to Governors on attendance matters
- Monitor the work that is completed by attendance officer and EWO.
- Induct new staff on attendance procedures
- Monitor attendance on a regular basis, setting targets for improvements as appropriate
- Ensure that contact is made with parents of poor attendees

Reception/Administration

- Process registers/absence forms
- Record late arrivals and enter them on to the system
- Send a text to parents advising them that their child was late to school
- Keep a record of pupils signing out
- Record telephone absences and file absent notes
- Produce weekly absence lists for senior leader
- Produce summary attendance data prior to attendance meetings
- Produce weekly summary of attendance for SLT meetings
- Administer first day calling system
- Liaise with EWO
- Highlight problems to staff when necessary

Attendance Officer

- First day response
- Bring students in to school
- Check on illness and gain proof of medication
- Produce attendance certificates
- Keep records of contact with parents
- Monitor attendance on a regular basis
- Liaise with EWO
- Generate a list of PA's and what we are doing for SLT weekly
- Produce attendance chronology

EWO

- Support the regular school attendance and help remove any barriers which may be preventing a pupil from fully accessing the education to which he/she is entitled.
- Produce absence letters to parents.
- Complete aggravated/court paperwork
- Issue fines for holidays
- Home Visits
- Attend multi-agency meetings
- Analyse attendance figures
- Attend regular meeting with Oakfield's attendance team

Communication

The schools attendance policy will be communicated through:

- School Website
- Emailed to all staff
- Text to parents to make them aware of policy

Strategies for Dealing with Attendance

- A statement of attendance will appear on each pupil's annual review
- Electronic and first day response calling and visiting will be used
- Standard letters home asking for reasons for absence will be used where no reasons are provided
- Standard letters, sent termly will be used where attendance is a concern in liaison with the EWO.
- SIMS attendance figures will be issued to analysis weekly
- Persistent absence (PA) figures will be monitored.

The Registration System

The School will use manual paper registers for keeping the school attendance records. The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity Approved back to school meeting (in relation to the Behaviour Policy)
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Registers by law must be kept for at least 3 years.

Register Security

The registers must be handed by staff to office staff at the end of the registration period. Office staff will ensure their security. Old registers will be securely archived for a period of 3 years.

The Law

The Education Act 1996 Part 1, Section 7 states:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable-

- [a] To his age, ability and aptitude and
 - [b] To any special needs he may have.
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

For educational purposes the term parent is used to include those that have parental responsibility and/or those that have the day to day care of the child.

The legislation that appertains to children who are of compulsory school age and are registered at school is contained within this Act.

Part V1 Section 444 contains the details of when an offence is committed if a child fails to attend school.

Register and Admission Roll keeping.

The legal requirements are found in:
The Education [Pupil Registration] (England) Regulations 2006

Categorisation of Absence

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised Absence
2. Authorised Absence
3. Approved Educational Activity

1. Unauthorised Absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised Absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

Note Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This would include:

- Work experience placements
- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities
- Link courses or approved education off site
- Most types of dual registration

This Policy was reviewed September 2015.

Signed:

Mr Lee Morfitt (Chair of Governors)