

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

Oldfield Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient education to all pupils and embraces the concept of equal opportunities for all. We will endeavour 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. As a school we have a zero tolerance of unauthorised absence.

The primary responsibility for ensuring that children and young people attend school rests with their parents/carers. However, promoting attendance and tackling absence is the responsibility of schools and agencies within the local authority. We will consistently work towards a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils, their parents or carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance including e.g., newsletters and end of term reports. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and there is a need to establish strong home-school links whenever there is concern about attendance. The target for attendance is currently set between 97.5% and 98% for this year.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

School attendance is subject to Education law and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education (DfE).

Each year the school will examine its attendance figures and set attendance/absence 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.

School Procedures

1. Any child who is absent from school at the morning or afternoon registration period must have their absence recorded as being authorised or unauthorised
2. 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

1. Morning registration takes place at 8.55 am. If a pupil arrives between 8.55 and 9.15 am, they will be marked as late (L). Any pupil arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence (U) unless there is an acceptable explanation i.e., school transport was delayed.

2. In cases for example, where the absence at registration was for attending an early morning medical appointment, the appropriate absence code will be entered.

The afternoon registration will be at 1.00pm for the EYFS and 1.15pm for KS1 and KS2

3. When making medical/dental appointments, every effort must be made to ensure appointments are outside school hours. Medical/Dental appointments must be accompanied by an appointment card or other written confirmation.

4. If a child is late, after the registers close at 9.15am, it has a negative impact on the child's learning and disrupts all the children in the class.

5. Parents/Carers must sign in children in on our Inventory Management System if they arrive after morning registration giving a reason. This will be automatically entered on to SIMS (School Information Management System). This also applies when children have or are attending an appointment i.e.; medical where they need to be signed in as well as out.

Absence from School

If children are healthy and they are of statutory school age they should attend school. In the unlikely event that your child needs to miss school, please contact the school office in the first instance; school staff will advise you as to your next steps

• First Day Absence

Parents/carers must give a written or verbal explanation, by ringing the school office. A message can be left on the absence line at any time but preferably first thing in the morning. A message can also be sent to the school via ParentMail. If no explanation is received by 9.30am school staff will contact the parent/carer.

Parents/Carers are expected to contact the school every day of the absence if the child is not well, unless an explanation is given on the first day. Parents can e-mail and/or send a message via ParentMail if they know how long the child will be away from school.

• Second Day Absence

If the school has not been contacted by the parents and carers by the second day of absence, the school will endeavour to undertake a home visit to check on the welfare of the child(ren). In the event, that the school cannot make contact, they will post a letter asking for the family to contact the school. The school will then contact social services.

Frequent Absence

In cases where a pupil begins to develop a pattern of absences, the school will try to resolve any concerns with parent/s. The Headteacher (or nominated member of staff) will liaise with the schools allocated Education Welfare Officer to ensure necessary action is taken when incidents of poor attendance and/or punctuality are identified.

Where incidents of poor attendance and/or lateness are identified through monitoring parents/carers will be notified in writing that this is a cause for concern. If this continues, the School will invite parents/carers in to discuss causes and ways forward.

The Law

Penalty Notices and Legal Action

Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1) 444(1A) states that

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

[a] to his/her age, ability and aptitude and

[b] to any special needs he/she may have.

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Failure to do so may result in legal action taken against the parent under the above legislation.

Leave of Absence

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states:

Regulation 7 of the 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.

Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service if days taken exceed 10 school sessions (five school days). This may result in prosecution in the Magistrates Court, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice will be issued to each parent for each child.

The penalty is per parent per child and will be £60 if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 if paid between 22 & 28 days.

If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or a fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

Application for term-time leave of absence must be made in writing in advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides. Leave of absence will only be granted where the Head teacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances'. Parent will be informed in writing of the head's decision.

There are approximately 195 school days (390 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.



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