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 e.g., newsletters and end of year 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.

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), 'Working together to improve attendance' from July 2026.
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. The afternoon registration will be at 1.00pm for the EYFS and 1.15pm for KS1 and KS2.

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.

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, 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 Inventry Management System if they arrive after morning registration giving a reason. This will be automatically entered on to Arbor (the school information management system). This also applies when children have or are attending an appointment i.e.; where they need to be signed in as well as out.

Absence from School

If children are healthy, 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 provide an explanation of the absence to the school office, ideally in writing via email or ParentMail. A message can be left on the absence line at any time but preferably first thing in the morning. 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 a suitable explanation (accepted by the school) is given on the first day. Parents/Carers 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 with 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 and/or the police for further advice.

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) in 10 weeks. 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 Charges will be made as follows:

First Offence

For the first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave, or irregular attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent per child paid within 28 days
Reduced to £80 per parent if paid within 21 days

Second Offence

Within 3 years of the first offence.
The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:
£160 per parent per child paid within 28 days
No reduction for early payment

Third Offence Onwards – Within 3 year of the first offence

The third time an offence is committed for unauthorised term time leave or irregular attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case will be presented straight to the Magistrates Court. Fines can be around £2,500 per parent per child. Cases found to be guilty in the Magistrates Court can show as a criminal record.

Notices to Improve

A Notice to Improve is a final opportunity for a parent to engage in support and improve before a penalty notice is issued. If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate but offers of support have not been engaged with by the parent or guardian or have not worked, a Notice to Improve should usually be sent to give parents/guardians a final chance to engage in support. A Notice to Improve does not need to be issued in cases where support is appropriate and an authorised officer can choose not to issue one in any case, including cases where support is appropriate but they do not expect a Notice to Improve would have any behavioural impact (because the parent/guardian has already received one for a similar offence

If sufficient improvement is not made following the service of a Notice to Improve, a Penalty Notice may be issued either during or at the end of the designated time period.

For any term-time leave of absence, an application 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 Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances. Parents/Guardians 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.



DFE Summary of
table of responsibiliie

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