

Ocker Hill Infant and Nursery School



Attendance Policy

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| Name of School: | Ocker Hill Infant School |
| Date of Policy: | March 2019 |
| Co-Ordinator: | Heidi Faulkner |
| Policy Consultation: | Curriculum |
| Review Date: | March 2020 |

Aims

The school recognises the clear link between the attendance and attainment of students. The aim of this policy is therefore to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance for individuals, groups and the pupil body as a whole. In order to achieve this, all members of the school community have an important contribution to make.

We will:

- *Promote a culture across the school which identifies the importance of regular and punctual attendance*
- *Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including students, parents, teachers and governors.*
- *Further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school*
- *Set targets to improve individual pupil and whole school attendance levels.*

Rights, Roles and Responsibility

We will develop a procedural framework to complement this policy that will define agreed roles and responsibilities for:

- ✓ Parents and carers
- ✓ Students
- ✓ School staff
- ✓ Governors

The framework will identify how we will deliver our aims in respect of regular and punctual attendance.

This **procedural framework** will include guidance on: -

- ✓ Registration
- ✓ What constitutes unauthorised absence
- ✓ Consistent use of codes for authorised absence
- ✓ Leave of Absence requests
- ✓ Systems for monitoring attendance and punctuality for individual students
- ✓ Systems for dealing with absence
- ✓ Systems for reintegrating students who have been absent
- ✓ Systems for monitoring whole school attendance and Action Planning
- ✓ Appropriate alternative curricular arrangements

Leave of Absence

Any requests for leave of absence will be strongly discouraged. Requests for absence will be declined unless the parents/carers are able to demonstrate **exceptional circumstances**.

Use of Penalty Notices

School may request that the Local Authority issue Penalty Notices in respect of unauthorised absence in accordance with the local Code of Conduct. The circumstances under which such requests will be considered will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Partnership Working

School will work with the Local Authority and support agencies as appropriate to ensure regular attendance at school. The criteria for referral and areas of responsibility for staff will be set out in the procedural framework on attendance.

Monitoring, Analysis, Action Planning

School will adopt systems for monitoring attendance at both individual pupil and whole school level, and will analyse patterns and trends of non-attendance to inform future Action Planning and target setting in respect of whole school attendance matters.

PROCEDURAL FRAMEWORK

Linked Policies

Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
Behaviour Management Policy

Targets

Our target for every student is at least **96%** attendance over the course of the year. Where students fall below this target they are **at risk** of the interventions listed below and of not being allowed to participate in trips or other extra-curricular activities for attendance.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents

- ✓ Ensure children attend regularly, and punctually
- ✓ Contact expected on first day of absence
- ✓ Contact each day for continued absence unless instructed otherwise by school
- ✓ Avoid any leave of absence in term time unless absolutely unavoidable
- ✓ Requests for leave of absence to be submitted on the authorised form, giving a minimum of 28 days notice
- ✓ Early contact with school where parents become aware of problems with attendance
- ✓ Attendance at meetings if concerns are identified
- ✓ Participation in Attendance Panels as required
- ✓ Supporting Attendance Contracts where appropriate
- ✓ Supporting the school in agreed interventions/action plans

Students

- ✓ Acknowledge behaviour needed out of school e.g. early bedtimes to allow punctual attendance
- ✓ Attend school regularly and punctually
- ✓ Adhere to appropriate systems for late registration
- ✓ Adhere to attendance contracts where appropriate

Attendance Lead

- ✓ Take the lead in ensuring attendance has a high profile within the school
- ✓ Ensure there are designated staff with day-to-day responsibility for attendance matters
- ✓ Ensure adequate, protected time is allocated to discharge these responsibilities
- ✓ Take overall responsibility for ensuring the school conforms to all statutory requirements in respect of attendance
- ✓ Monitor daily attendance and implement interventions as appropriate
- ✓ Work with parents to ensure the students attend
- ✓ Provide rewards for improving attendance and overall high attendance

All Staff

- ✓ To provide a welcoming atmosphere for children
- ✓ To provide a safe learning environment
- ✓ To ensure an appropriate and responsive curriculum
- ✓ To provide a sympathetic response to any students' concerns
- ✓ To promote regular attendance and punctuality
- ✓ To be aware of factors that can contribute to non-attendance
- ✓ To be aware of the part all staff can play in ensuring attendance is seen as important for all students
- ✓ To see students' attendance as the responsibility of all staff, even if the co-ordination and management of attendance are designated responsibilities of specified staff
- ✓ To participate in training regarding school systems and procedures
- ✓ Teachers will only use A or N code in registers

Governors

- ✓ Agree adoption of Attendance Policy and review it annually
- ✓ Agree statutory targets for attendance for the school
- ✓ Monitor attendance figures termly
- ✓ Lead Attendance Panels as required
- ✓ Appoint a Link Governor for attendance and behaviour

PROCEDURES

Registration

1. The Attendance Lead should ensure that staff responsible for marking registers are aware of the codes to be used and that registers are marked accurately and consistently.
2. Registration periods take place twice a day at 8.45 am and 1.20 pm (8.30 am and 12.30 pm for Nursery).
3. Registers are sent electronically to the school office at 8.55 am and 1.30 pm (8.40 am and 12.40 pm for Nursery).
4. The formal close of registration for morning registration is 9.15 am
5. If a pupil arrives after registration has closed they are marked as U (absent for the full session)
6. If a pupil needs to leave school during the day they must be signed out by the school office.
7. There is an answer-phone facility available for parents to leave messages regarding their children's attendance
8. Any such messages received by school are logged, with the time, date and reason for absence noted
9. The Attendance Lead/Business Manager are authorised to amend absence codes
10. Where students are dual registered, are on voluntary service or are taking part in other approved educational activities, the register will be amended following regular discussion and information sharing with the other establishment.
11. Consistency of use of codes, and acceptable reasons for absence across the whole school will be monitored as part of ongoing attendance data evaluation (see Monitoring and Analysis section)
12. It may occasionally be necessary to inform parents that no further absences will be authorised for a particular pupil unless medical evidence is provided. This decision can only be made by the Attendance Lead/Senior Attendance Consultant and must be communicated to parents in a letter giving reasons for the decision

Leave of Absence

Any changes to the school's policy on leave of absence will be made known to parents via induction information that is provided to parents at the start of the academic year. Parents may request a copy of this attendance policy for more specific information. Changes will also be published on the school website.

Parents are strongly discouraged from taking their children out of school, for any reason, during term time. All requests for leave of absence will be declined unless parents can evidence exceptional circumstances.

Requests for leave of absence during exam times will not be authorised.

Parents must apply for leave of absence using the school's application form which can be requested from the school office.

If a pupil fails to return from an agreed period of absence, investigations will be made by staff (telephone calls by Office Staff/home visit by the Senior Attendance Consultant)

If school investigations fail to make contact with the parents/pupil the case will be referred to the Children Missing Education Team who may, after further investigation, inform school that the pupil may be removed from roll. Police welfare checks may also be requested.

Penalty Notices will be used in cases where an application for leave of absence is refused and the pupil is subsequently absent during the dates originally requested. Parents will be warned of potential consequences when an application for leave of absence is declined. Penalty Notices will be used in cases where a pupil is absent without a request for leave of absence being submitted, and where the school is satisfied, after investigation, that the pupil is on an unauthorised holiday.

Where attendance falls below 90% parents may be prosecuted.

Attendance Contracts

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 makes provision for the use of Contracts where attendance is a cause for concern. The school may choose to initiate such contracts following the case being discussed and agreed by the Senior Attendance Consultant and school Attendance Lead. Attendance contracts will not typically be used the first time a pupil and their parents are invited to attend an attendance panel. In serious cases where all previous targets have failed, parenting contracts may be used as a precursor to prosecution, and used as a method of gathering evidence of parent's failure to improve their child's attendance.

Each individual contract will identify areas of concern and set specific targets to be met by students, parents and the school:

- ✓ Each contract will typically last six school weeks
- ✓ Following this period the contract will be reviewed and a new contract issued if necessary
- ✓ Attendance contracts are voluntary, although parents will be encouraged to accept them. Where contracts are refused, it may be necessary for school to make a request to the Authority's legal team for prosecution.
- ✓ Where contracts are successful a letter of acknowledgement will be sent and new targets set to continue the improvement.
- ✓ Where contracts are unsuccessful they will be reviewed and a new contract may be issued or school may decide to make a request for prosecution.

Penalty Notices

The school may seek to use Penalty Notices in the following cases:

1. Following an attendance meeting where parents have been warned in writing of the school's intention to use a penalty notice.
2. Where an application for leave of absence has been refused and the pupil is subsequently absent during the requested dates.
3. Where an application for leave of absence has not been submitted but the pupil is absent and the school is satisfied, following investigation that the pupil is on an unauthorised holiday.
4. Students failing to return after an authorised leave of absence.
5. Students who are persistently late after registration has closed.

SYSTEMS FOR DEALING WITH ATTENDANCE ISSUES

Lateness

1. The school has clearly defined systems for identifying students whose punctuality is a cause for concern and for implementing work with those students.
2. The Attendance Lead and Senior Attendance Consultant will discuss the effects of persistent lateness with students and parents as necessary.
3. Where persistent lateness is a serious problem (students receiving 5 late marks in one half term) parents and students will attend a meeting.
4. The school has clearly defined systems for identifying students whose attendance is a cause for concern, and for implementing work with those students.

The Senior Attendance Lead has responsibility for monitoring whole school attendance and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's policy and procedures:

Data on attendance will be collected and analysed a minimum of once a half term throughout the year with the Senior Attendance Consultant. Attendance will be monitored more frequently for those at risk, daily if necessary. This will focus on:

- ✓ Patterns of broken weeks
- ✓ Patterns of absence
- ✓ Patterns of lateness
- ✓ Patterns of medical appointments
- ✓ Persistent Absenteeism
- ✓ Those eligible for pupil premium
- ✓ CLA and SEN pupils

Regular checks will be made to ensure correct and consistent use of absence codes across the school. Trends in reasons for absence will be analysed termly:

- ✓ Extended medical leave
- ✓ Use of the codes C
- ✓ Leave of absence (incl. extended holidays)

- ✓ Exclusions
- ✓ Trends in particular groups (SEN, CLA, FSM, ethnic groups, gender) classes or years will be identified half term.
- ✓ Attendance data will inform action planning, and will be linked to the school development plan and future revisions of the Whole School Attendance Policy.
- ✓ Data will be returned promptly to the Local Authority and the Department for Education within set deadlines
- ✓ Evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's systems for registration, identification of attendance issues and dealing with lateness will be on-going with a formal review taking place annually.
- ✓ Monitor and evaluate the impact of interventions half termly
- ✓ Frequency and nature of feedback re analysis of attendance data to:
 - a) Governors – termly
 - b) Staff – on-going / half-term
 - c) Students – ongoing via attendance panels
 - d) Parents –ongoing via attendance panels and half termly reports issued to each family.

Appendix

DAILY ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

| Day of Absence | Procedure | Staff Member |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1st | <p>Those pupils marked, as N with no reason given will receive a first day call between 09:30 – 10:30.</p> <p>If there is no response to the phone call a request is made for the Senior Attendance Consultant to do a home visit.</p> <p>Senior Attendance Consultant (SAC) will inform the school of the outcome. This must be recorded, along with staff intervention and timings.</p> <p>If SAC makes no contact a calling card is left at the house.</p> <p>For any unexplained absences where no reason has been ascertained by phone call or home visit a reason should be sought by the Class Teacher or Business Manager as soon as they return to school.</p> | <p>School Office Staff</p> <p>Attendance Lead/ Senior Attendance Consultant</p> <p>Class Teacher/ Business Manager</p> |
| 2nd | <p>First day contact call to be completed again if pupil still coded as N.</p> <p>If no response to call send immediately out to the SAC. If no contact the SAC will leave another calling card. Calls to be made to all other contacts on data collection sheet.</p> | <p>School Office Staff</p> <p>Senior Attendance Consultant</p> |
| 3rd | <p>Continued unauthorised absence SAC will make A 3rd Home Visit, hand deliver Unauthorised Absence letter (prepared by school Attendance Lead) as still no response.</p> | <p>Attendance Lead/ Senior Attendance Consultant</p> |
| 4th | <p>Letter sent to Parent inviting them in to school to discuss their child's attendance concerns.</p> <p>Contact Early Intervention Team – Welfare check/Safeguarding</p> | <p>Attendance Lead</p> |
| 5th | <p>Begin Proceedings following advice of SAC</p> | <p>All</p> |

ATTENDANCE INTERVENTION HIERACHY

| | | Staff Member |
|---------------|---|--|
| All Pupils | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend school regularly and be punctual daily, registration takes place twice daily at 8:45 am and 1.20 pm Use weekly attendance figures to promote good attendance in tutor time and assembly Discuss attendance patterns and impact of attendance on a regular basis. Pupils/ parents will receive individual percentage attendance on a half termly basis. Intervention will be put in place where required Teachers to reinforce to pupils the link between good attendance and attainment on a regular basis. | All Teaching Staff, Attendance Lead |
| 98% + | Pupils with 98% and above rewarded on a half / termly basis E.g. certificates, reward stickers. Prizes given for 100% attendance at end of academic year. | Attendance Lead |
| 95% to 97.9% | Monitor only – no action required. | Attendance Lead/ Senior Attendance Consultant |
| 94.9% to 90% | Letter of concern sent to parents advising pupils should be aiming to reach 95% attendance. Letter of congratulations to be sent if attendance improves. Pupils failing to make progress towards attendance targets will move to the next intervention level. | Attendance Lead |
| Less than 90% | <p>RED LEVEL 1 INTERVENTION</p> <p>89.9 - 85% Attendance meeting held by Attendance Lead and Senior Attendance Consultant with parents/carers. Invite to this meeting sent out by post to parents/carers individually. Appropriate targets set with parents/carers.</p> <p>Monitored by Attendance Lead/Senior Attendance Consultant. If targets met Lead will continue to monitor.</p> <p>If no improvement and/or attendance falls further intervention escalates to Red Level 2</p> | Attendance Lead/ Senior Attendance Consultant |

PENALTY NOTICES

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| <p>PN 1 unauthorised Absences Register codes 0 and/or U</p> <p>PN 2 unauthorised leave in term time or failure to return from authorized leave Register code G</p> | <p>Where a pupil accrues 10 sessions of unauthorised absence during a term, or 14 sessions over two consecutive terms, the Penalty Notice procedure may be used.</p> <p>The unauthorised absences can be late after the register closes at 9.15 am</p> <p>Code U, unauthorised absence Code O and/or unauthorised holiday Code G. This can be an effective strategy to discourage holidays in term time, or to reduce unauthorised absence where parents do not engage with school support.</p> <p>The use of Penalty Notices would not normally be considered appropriate for cases of where absence is chronic.</p> |
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