



Attendance Policy

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At Otley All Saints CE Primary School we are committed to:

- Ensuring that all our pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each to realise his/her full potential.
- Providing a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.
- Working with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.
- Utilising an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges improvements pupils make to their attendance and timekeeping and challenges the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.
- Establishing an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

Statutory Duty of Schools

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

Aims of the Policy

1. To ensure absent children are not at risk
2. To improve the overall percentage of pupils attending school.
3. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.
4. To define roles and responsibilities and promote consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
5. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.
6. To systematically gather and analyse attendance related data.
7. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
8. To continue to review and improve systems of rewards.
9. To promote effective partnerships with the Attendance Improvement Service and other services and agencies.
10. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

Implementation

1. **Improving the overall percentage attendance of pupils attending school**
 - ***We will apply the whole school attendance policy consistently***
The school will review this policy regularly and assess its implementation and effectiveness.
The policy will be known to all, promoted and implemented throughout the school.
 - ***We have established and will maintain a high profile for attendance and punctuality***

See Whole School Approaches (Appendix 1)

- ***We relate attendance issues directly to the school's vision, aims and curriculum***
- ***We monitor progress in attendance measurable outcomes***
The school will endeavour to meet the yearly targets agreed by the Governing Body.

2. **Making attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors**

- ***We use our staff handbook and school website to promote high attendance and punctuality***
Both documents contain statements about attendance.
- ***Our annual pupil progress report includes attendance figures***
The report to parents includes the child's authorised and unauthorised attendance for the year.
- ***Reports to Governors include attendance***
The Headteacher's report to the Governing Body includes a statement on attendance.
- ***Attendance is discussed at the induction meeting for new arrivals and their parents***
The importance of attendance is addressed at these meetings
- ***An attendance and punctuality statement is included in Home School agreements***
Every child receives a Home/School Agreement which is signed by the school, parent and child. The agreement includes a statement on attendance.
- ***We provide an award system***
To raise the profile of attendance in the school, at the end of the school year 100% attendance certificates are presented

3. **Identifying roles and responsibilities and promoting consistency in carrying out designated tasks**

- ***Roles and responsibilities within the school staffing structure***

Registers are a legal document and are kept according to the approved regulations.

Every day the class teacher marking the register will consider whether any absence/lateness is causing concern. The Headteacher will be informed of any concerns and a decision made as to how the concern will be best acted upon.

- ***We endeavour to maintain unambiguous procedures for statutory registration***

The school will ensure that pupils are registered accurately and efficiently. The morning registration is 9.00 am, afternoon registration to be completed within 15

minutes of start of session. Registers are closed at the following times: morning 9.15 am and afternoon 1.30 pm.

The register is marked by the class teacher, marking the pupil present or absent. The pupils who have arrived late, at both the morning and afternoon sessions are given a late present mark up to 9.15 am in the morning and 1.30 pm in the afternoon. After these times see **Lates** below.

Lates – Children who arrive late will report to reception where they will be registered as late. Before the designated time this is a ‘Late Present’ – which appears as an L on the register. After the time it is a ‘Late Absent’ – which appears as an @ on the register.

Absence notes/Telephone messages from parents will be received by the class teacher and registers filled in appropriately. The note/messages will be stored in the register.

- ***Responding quickly to lateness (pupils and parents)***

A letter is sent to parents/carers where pupils have three or more late marks within a week and there have been a number of late arrivals recorded in the previous two weeks, to seek their support in ensuring their child’s prompt arrival at school.

The class teacher will monitor pupils who show a pattern of being late. The Headteacher will be informed where lateness persists and a card will be set up and occasions accurately recorded. Parents will be informed of school’s concern and asked to meet with the Head to discuss the issue and seek an improvement.

- ***Responding quickly to unexplained absences***

The school has a duty to ensure the safety of all its pupils, and to prioritise the safeguarding of children even when this requires difficult conversations with family members. An unexplained absence will always be followed up with a phone call by the admin officers requesting a valid reason for Absence. If the parent is not available a message will be left for them to contact the school. The admin officer will make a further phone call on the next day if necessary. If on the 3rd day there has been no response a letter will be sent (Appendix 3). If there is still no response within 3 days another letter will follow (Appendix 4)

Where there are repeated unexplained absences a record card will be set up and all absences recorded. A letter requesting a meeting with the Headteacher will be instigated – this is Stage 1 of the Attendance Improvement 5 stage process.

Should a pattern of unexplained absences emerge then a referral will be made to the Attendance Improvement Service. This is Stage 2 of the Attendance Improvement Service 5 stage process.

Stages 3, 4 and 5 will be followed as and when necessary (reference to ‘Attendance Toolkit)

- ***We review attendance***

Annual attendance figures are monitored by the Headteacher. The figures are compared, analysed and evaluated by the Headteacher and SMT. Figures are measured against targets agreed by governors and also against previous targets. Percentage figures and comparisons are reported to governors. The data will be analysed in relation to targets set and specific individuals or groups will be identified for whom special attention is required.

4. **Providing support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils**

- ***We highlight attendance issues with pupils***
We use a range of appropriate opportunities as and when necessary to provide support, advice and guidance to pupils with attendance issues. This may be:
 - In PSHCE
 - Circle Time
 - Assemblies
 - School Council
 - Staff talking to pupils
 - Staff talking to parents
- ***We draw on support from other agencies***
The Attendance Improvement Officer may be called on to support families. We will call on other agencies as and when appropriate (social Services, Health, Police etc)
- ***We sustain and endeavour to develop further, good communication with parents***
The school prides itself on the good and positive relationships it has with parents. Effective communication systems are in place and parents are made to feel welcome and are able to gain easy access to the Headteacher, Class Teacher, Classroom Assistant and other staff to talk over attendance or/and lateness concerns. It is the policy of the school to report success and achievement as well as difficulties.
- ***We provide accurate and up-to-date attendance information for parents***
Leaflets on Attendance from the DfE are made available for parents.
- ***We involve parents from earliest stage***
Good attendance is promoted at the meeting for Reception September entrants and parents of nursery children are encouraged to inform school of an absence.

5. **The systematic gathering and analysis of attendance related data**

- ***Manual registration***
This is used to generate accurate figures for recording purposes and for reporting to parents and governors.
- ***Standardise recording of authorised/unauthorised absence, educational activity and presence***
Guidelines are inside every register
Parents inform school if a pupil is going out of school for any reason after registration and the child is collected by an adult

- **Identifying developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness**
The Class teacher, Headteacher and Learning Mentor monitor this through the scrutiny of attendance records.

6. Positive and consistent communication between home and school

- **Making First day absence contact**
The Admin Officers are responsible for trying to contact parents on the first day of absence. (see section 3)
- **Promoting expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents**
Parents are regularly reminded of the appropriate procedures.
- **Parental Holidays**
Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school during term time. By law they must ask permission for their child to miss school. If they fail to gain the school's permission they risk receiving a fixed penalty fine. If their request for leave is unauthorised and they still choose to take their child out of school for a holiday or another reason, they may be fined £60 per child per parent, rising to £120 per child per parent if not paid within 21 days. If the fine is unpaid after 28 days, court proceedings can be initiated. All schools in the north-west area of Leeds have agreed to follow a common policy on absence during term time. If parents feel that their only option is to apply for permission for their child to be absent from school they must complete a request form and return it to the school for authorisation at least 10 school days in advance of the proposed leave.
- **Condoned absence**
It is illegal for parents to absent their children from school. Unauthorised absences are carefully monitored and every effort is made to liaise with and work with parents who condone unnecessary absences in order to improve the child's overall attendance.
- **Providing information in a user friendly way**
Translations can be provided if necessary and leaflets on attendance from the DfE are available in a range of languages from the school.
- **Encouraging all parents into school**
Parents are welcomed into school at the beginning and the end of the school day for informal discussion with class teacher and for two more formal parent consultation meetings in both Autumn and Spring

7. Recognising the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence

- **We will be sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning pupils**
Teachers will ensure that children do not feel isolated after an absence. Work may be of an individual nature or friendships encouraged.
- **Involve/inform all staff in reintegration process**

- *Provide opportunities for counselling and feedback*
- *Consider peer support and mentoring*
- *Involve parents as far as possible*
- *Agree timescale for review of reintegration plan*
- *Include Attendance Improvement, parents and pupils in reintegration plan*

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACHES

Bullying

The school has effective behaviour, anti-bullying and anti-racist policies. Perpetrators are identified and their behaviour carefully monitored. The whole school adopts a positive approach to discipline and this is regularly reviewed by senior management.

SEN Monitoring

There is an effective system of identification in line with the Code of Practice. The SENCO plays an active role and gives support to children and families who may be non-attenders due to learning or behavioural difficulties.

Strategies used in class to promote good attendance

Teachers encourage children to improve their work to enable them to do better by

- Making clear the shape of the lesson
- Indicating what outcomes are intended
- Setting realistic targets to be achieved in given times
- Stating clearly how work will be assessed
- Establishing marking procedures and using some pupil's self assessment
- Recognising effects of regular failure and finding compensation for it
- Helping some pupils to cope rather than improve
- Avoiding repetitious unchallenging tasks

Teachers employ a range of teaching and learning styles to enable all pupils to feel secure, included and valued and differentiate work to meet the needs of pupils.

All staff welcome pupils back into school after absence and assist in their smooth reintegration back into class.

Appendix 2

Dear ()

On your child as absent from school.
Please will you phone or write to explain this absence in order that we can record it.

It is our responsibility to ascertain the reasons behind all absence and your help in this matter would be greatly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Appendix 3

Dear ()

Recently we (wrote to you/phoned and left a message) regarding the absence of (child's name) on (date)

As we indicated on that occasion it is the school's responsibility to account for all absences and your help in this matter is requested.

Without your input (name's) absence will have to be recorded as unauthorised and this will go onto (his/her) record of attendance.

Please take a few moments to inform us as to the reason by either phoning or writing a note. This would be most appreciated.

Yours sincerely