



NEW OSCOTT PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT FOR ATTENDANCE

Designated Lead Person (DLP) for Attendance – Karl Holmes
Attendance Administrator-Natalie Kerr

Date of Review – October 2018

Aims and Principles

Our aim is that all children attend school punctually and daily unless they are unwell.
The higher the attendance rate for an individual then the greater the opportunity for their success.

Whole School attendance target: 96%+

Individual attendance target 96%+

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents/Carers

Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school or receives an appropriate education.

Parents will be informed about the time of the beginning of each session and the expectation regarding lateness and absence. A letter or telephone call is needed to inform us of the reasons for absence and lateness.

Parents will be notified of term dates and additional days when pupils are not required to attend school i.e. teacher training days.

Parents will be informed when the school has concerns regarding absence or lateness.

Class Teacher

The class teacher will be responsible for completing the daily attendance and absence records and sending them electronically to the school office.

The class teacher will share attendance information with parents at Parents' Evening.

An attendance report will be included with each individual child's end of year report.

If the class teacher has concerns with regards to a child's attendance or punctuality this will be recorded on CPOMs and discussed with the parent at the first opportunity.

Attendance Manager

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Manager/Attendance Administrator to check on authorised and unauthorised absences and to contact parents if the need arises.

The Attendance Manager will also track attendance, identify attendance trends, reward high or improved attendance.

The Attendance Manager will also inform the Governing Body each term of attendance and absence rates throughout the school.

The Attendance Manager will respond to the concerns of class teachers as recorded on CPOMs.

The Attendance Manager sets annual targets and produces an ISP (Individual School Plan) for attendance.

The Attendance Manager or other members of the Senior Leadership Team can refer a child to the school nurse if they are regularly absent from school due to ill health with parental consent.

Procedures for Registration

Registration takes place twice a day at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session.

In the Nursery Department, morning registration time is 9.00am. Afternoon registration time is 1.00pm.

In the Infant Department registration time is 9.00 a.m.

In the Junior Department, registration is at 8.55 a.m.

Attendance and absences are recorded electronically using e-portal. Class teachers have passwords to access the daily register. At close of registration the data is sent electronically to the school office. Children are recorded as late (L) if they arrive before 9.30am. If a child arrives late to school after 9.30am, their attendance is recorded as an unauthorised late (U).

Parental Contact

Parents are requested to notify the school by telephone, by email or in writing if their child is to be, or has been, absent from school.

First Day Absence

It is our policy to send a text message to a parent if we have not received a reason for absence by 10.00 a.m. each day. At New Oscott Primary School, we will attempt to contact each contact until we receive a response. (All parents should be providing at least two points of contact). If a child's attendance is a concern, a home visit will be completed.

Collection and Use of Attendance Data

The CMIS system is used for admission and registration data.

The data from weekly official registers is used to monitor absences or lateness of individual pupils so that appropriate action can be taken and parents informed.

Data can also be used to monitor absences and lateness with regards to:

- Gender
- Year groups
- Patterns and nature of authorised absences

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absences are acceptable where there is a specific reason for the pupil's absence. These will include:

- Medical appointments
- Observance of religious festival (max 2 days per school year)
- Illness
- Specific circumstances (authorised by Head or Deputy Head Teacher)

Holidays and Leave in term time

Parents are actively encouraged to take holidays out of term time. As of September 2013, Head Teachers are no longer able to authorise absences for holidays or grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances, therefore all holidays will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Evidence of date of booking and ticket/flight confirmation may be asked for as evidence by the school. If leave is granted then the Head Teacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school. If leave is not agreed a copy of LD1 (appendix 1) is sent to both parents separately by 1st class post and signed by the Head Teacher. When parents do not request leave in advance, attempts will be made to contact the parents and evidence of return date will be requested. LD 2 (appendix 2) will be sent separately to each parent. Copies of letter will be kept as evidence. A penalty notice can be given when there has been a minimum of five school days G code and a child has had five days of unauthorised absence in the previous 12 calendar months or at least ten days of G codes in the previous 12 calendar months.

When leave is authorised, a home school contract will be signed by both parents and the school to agree the dates of leave, if the child does not return on the agreed date, a penalty notice may be given.

Follow- up Registration Data

The school will respond in any of the following situations:

- Unexplained absence of 3 days when a child has not returned to school.
- Separate authorised absences totalling 10 days over a half term period.
- Persistent lateness i.e. more than 5 sessions in a half term period.

Action will be taken by the office staff or Deputy Head Teacher who will first of all contact parent/carer to establish the reason for absence or to ensure that parents are aware of absence or lateness. Such action will be recorded and results noted. If attendance of an individual pupil is a concern, this will be raised by the class teacher with parents/carers at the first opportunity or Parents' Evening. If there is a continuing concern and no response from parents then further action may be required involving the Deputy Head Teacher or which results in other agencies becoming involved. Prompt action on non-attendance is an important area of safeguarding.

Fast track for Attendance Campaign

New Oscott Primary School follows the Fast-Track for Attendance programme, an initiative designed to raise individual and whole school attendance by the use of legal action. A member of the SLT has received the Fast-Track prosecution training and will lead on the Fast-Track programme. A whole school letter (See Appendix 3) is sent to all families at the start of the year with regards to Fast-Track. New Oscott Primary School will follow the Fast-Track Timeline and procedures.

Medical Evidence

At New Oscott we do not routinely ask for medical evidence if the reason given for a child's absence is illness however if a pupil's attendance is of serious concern (below 90%) or has had at least 10 sessions absence recorded as illness in an academic year, telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are not acceptable as medical evidence. Evidence will be requested (See letter Appendix 4) for the absence to be recorded as I:

- Copy of prescription
- Slip with date, pupil's name and surgery stamp by Receptionist
- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Print screen of medical notes
- Doctors medical certificate
- Doctors letter
- Medication prescribed by Doctor
- Letter from a professional
- Evidence of a phone call to NHS 111 Service
- Any other relevant evidence

If no evidence is given then the absence will be recorded as *O*. When a child is ill in school and has to be collected, the absence will be recorded as *I* and any following days will be recorded as *I* at the school's discretion and other medical evidence will not be necessary. If a child has been off school for a longer period of time due to serious illness, evidence will not be requested.

Re-Entry Strategies for Absentees

These strategies will depend upon the individual needs of the pupils or staff but could include: -

- an initial meeting with the Deputy Head Teacher or Head Teacher

- part-time attendance,
- accompanied attendance,
- daily/weekly monitoring,
- a mentor or buddy will be provided to ease return to school if appropriate.

Punctuality

Pupils who are late cause disruption to a large group of children. Names of latecomers will be recorded on arrival to school for data purposes and fire regulations. This record is monitored by the Deputy Head Teacher and the parents of persistent latecomers are contacted and advised of the problem with a request for punctuality. If punctuality does not improve then parents will be requested to attend a discussion of the matter with the Deputy Head Teacher or Head Teacher.

Admissions and Removal

All schools are required to admit a pupil if they have a vacancy. When a child cannot be admitted parents will be informed of the Admission Policy and placed on a waiting list. If there is an unexplained absence of 6 weeks then pupils will be taken off the role.

A pupil can be registered at a mainstream school and a special school/ unit. If the pupil is in attendance at the SEN school code 'D' should be used.

Children Missing from Education

A child missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. At New Oscott we follow guidance and procedures from the Local Authority which is explained in the Safeguarding Policy. We will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more. Staff are alert to signs to look out for and individual triggers to be aware of when considering the risk of potential safeguarding concerns such as FGM, forced marriage and radicalisation. (See Safeguarding Policy)

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

In line with the Mandatory Reporting Duty (31st October 2015) if staff have a concern that a girl may be at risk of FGM and be absent from school then they will follow the Local Authority Safeguarding Policy procedures and notify the Designated Senior Lead in school who will report this to the relevant professionals. The police will be informed if it is discovered that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out.

Attendance Targets and Rewards

Our aim is for each child to attain 100% attendance with no unauthorised absences. Children who achieve 100% attendance are awarded with a bronze award at the end of the autumn term, a silver award at the end of the spring term and a gold award in assembly at the end of the school year. Good attendance is encouraged and recognised by the awarding of a weekly attendance certificate, identifying the class with the highest attendance each week.

New Pupils and Staff

New parents will be informed about registration procedures, as will any new members of staff.

Reporting

- New Oscott Primary School will publish, in its prospectus and Governors' annual report, attendance data for the preceding school year.
- Reports on individual pupils sent to parents include information on the pupil's attendance record showing the number of unauthorised absences.

- New Oscott Primary School submits attendance information to the LA (Local Authority) and DFE (Department for Education).

Policy agreed by Governing Body:

Policy to be reviewed: Autumn term 2019

Appendix 1

LD1

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

Thank you for your recent leave of absence request.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise your child's leave of absence.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.

If you decide to take the leave the absence will be marked as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action taken.

If the request is due to a family emergency, careful consideration is required as to whether it is appropriate or in the best interest of the child to miss school for emergencies being dealt with by adult family members.

It is essential for your child to be in school regularly to benefit fully from their educational opportunities. Good attendance will ensure that your child can reach their full potential. To achieve this, your child needs to attend school every day. For example, two weeks absence is equivalent to around 50 lessons missed which will never be repeated.

We are sure you would not wish to jeopardise your child's academic progress by taking them away at this time.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher

Enclosure: copy of 'Leave of Absence Request Form'

Appendix 2

LD2

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

**Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB»
Yr «YearGroup» at «SchoolName»**

This letter is sent to parents/carers whose child is/has been absent from school due to possible unauthorised leave in term time.

If it was not unauthorised leave but illness which caused your child's absence you will need to provide medical evidence to the school in order for it to be authorised. This could include:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes
- Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP 'sick' notes are not required unless the child has been treated abroad.

If you asked a friend/relative to notify the school of the leave, you must contact the school yourself, to explain the absence - but this does not mean it will be authorised.

Under the Regulations, retrospective authorisation for leave in exceptional circumstances is not permitted

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that:

'If a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school his/her parent(s) are guilty of an offence'.

Unauthorised absence may result in a Penalty Notice being issued or legal action being taken against you. I would also advise that if your child is still currently absent from school, you must return the child to school with immediate effect.

Yours sincerely,

Head Teacher



School logo
(delete if preferred)

School Attendance

A very important message for all Parents/Carers

Insert Date

Dear Parent/Carer,

..... Academy/School is working in partnership with parents and the Local Authority to improve school attendance. **We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly.**

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams
- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- are more likely to become involved in crime
- miss out on opportunities in further education and the world of work?

How does your child compare?

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher, within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006. **Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.**

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, truancy, not wanting to go to school, alleged bullying (speak to school immediately to resolve the issue) are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school

with support from staff and peers can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

It is a parent's legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education. Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

Legal action that may be taken includes:

- **Issuing penalty notices:** Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made. So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.
- **Taking parents to court for unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) - court can fine each parent up to £1000 per child, order payment of prosecution costs and/or impose a Parenting Order.
- **Taking parents to court for persistent unauthorised absence:** Education Act 1996 Section 444(1A) - court can fine each parent up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Being taken to court could result in you having a criminal record.

Frequent absence can add up to a considerable amount of lost learning and can seriously disadvantage your child in adult life.

If your child's level of absence is of serious concern, the school will offer advice and support to improve attendance. After this, any unauthorised absence may result in the School and the Local Authority taking legal action.

Again, we would like to thank those parents who make sure their child is attending school regularly and are therefore benefiting fully from their educational opportunity.

Yours sincerely,



Lead Attendance Officer

(delete if preferred)

Head teacher

Education Legal Intervention Team

Alternative Provision, Attendance, and Independent Education Service

Birmingham City Council

Appendix 4

Ref:

Insert date

«ParentTitle» «ParentFirstName» «ParentLastName»
«AddressLine1»
«AddressLine2»
«City»
«PostCode»

Dear «ParentTitle» «ParentLastName»

Re: «ChildFirstName» «ChildLastName» - D.O.B. «ChildDOB» Yr «YearGroup»

Your child's poor attendance at school this year is causing serious concern as *he/she* has been absent for *number* of sessions out of a possible *number* of sessions and this will make it much harder for your child to achieve good results in their school work. **Most/ All** of the absence has been due to illness or for medical reasons.

It has been decided that due to the high level of your child's absence, **the Head Teacher will no longer authorise any absence for medical reasons unless supported by medical evidence.**

I have to advise you that we monitor all pupils with poor school attendance and will take action when absence is unauthorised; this may lead to prosecution.

Therefore should **Pupil's name** have any further sessions of absence because of illness or medical reasons you are strongly advised to provide one of the following which may enable the Head Teacher to authorise your child's absence:

- Medical appointment card with one appointment entered
- Letter from a professional such as a hospital Consultant or Psychologist
- Evidence of a consultation with NHS 111
- Medication prescribed by a GP
- Copy of prescription
- Print screen of medical notes
- Letters concerning hospital appointments
- Slip with date, pupils name and surgery stamp, signed by Receptionist

Doctors or GP 'sick' notes are not required. Please do not request these from your GP.

Please be aware that telephone calls and handwritten notes from a parent/carer are **not** acceptable as medical evidence when attendance is of serious concern.

I have to advise you as a parent/carer of a child of statutory school age, you have a legal responsibility to ensure full time education suitable to the child's age, ability and aptitude and any special educational needs the child may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Education Act 1996 Section 444).

We work with parents to improve school attendance. Good attendance will mean that your child is able to achieve the best grades for their ability and have real opportunity in further education and the world of work. Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Children who do not attend regularly:

- do not achieve well in exams

- find it difficult to maintain friendships
- miss out on social events
- are more likely to become involved in crime

If you feel that your child has ongoing or unresolved medical issues you are advised to approach your doctor urgently.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter or your child's attendance please contact me. If you call and I am not available, please leave a message and contact telephone number.

Yours sincerely,

«School Representative»
Job Title