



# OAKWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

Review Date	Spring 2017
Reviewed by	LM
Review Cycle	3 years
Next review due	Spring 2020

Signed :.....

Name :.....  
on behalf of the Governing Body of Oakwood Junior School

# Attendance Policy

## INTRODUCTION

Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. 100% attendance is certainly possible, but in the event of your child being away from school it is essential that you, the parent inform the school of the reasons for the absence.

## WHY?

- The Education Act 1996 requires parents and carers to ensure their child receives efficient fulltime education, suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Under current government legislation, all absence figures, together with the reasons for absence have to be reported to the Schools Governing Body, Local Authority (LA), and the Department for Education (DfE).
- Parents, guardians and carers must ensure that they are fully aware of the school's attendance policy as any absence will have a huge impact on your child's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents, guardians and carers, together with our school staff all have a part to play in ensuring full potential is achieved.
- Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is an exceptional reason for the absence. There are two main categories of absences:

Authorised Absence: is when the school has accepted the explanation offered as satisfactory justification for the absence, or given approval in advance for such an absence.

Unauthorised Absence: is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request.

- Please be aware that when a parent telephones the school with information that their child is unable to attend due to illness, or other circumstances, this may not be automatically authorised.
- Your child's current and previous school attendance will be taken into consideration and as a result the absence may not be authorised.
- Keeping your child off school with minor ailments such as a headache or slight cold is not acceptable. Repeated absences will require us to request that you obtain medical evidence from your doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office. (Please note: that the school is not asking any parent to incur a charge for such information and will not be liable for the cost.)
- If a child has been absent for five days or more (including a Bank Holiday) the school may ask parents to obtain medical evidence from the doctor's surgery. This may be in the form of a date stamped compliment slip confirming your visit, or prescription or medicine bottle. Any of the above is to be shown to a member of the school office.

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem. The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents, guardians or carers, the school with its Governing Body and the Local Authority.

# Attendance policy

## AIMS OF THE POLICY

To promote regular attendance thus offering all pupils equal access to learning. To ensure that parent's understand the procedures for attendance at Oakwood Junior school.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

- Meet the Government attendance targets set for us.
- Create a clearly understood attendance procedure that is effectively communicated to and understood by parents/carers.
- Ensure pupils are in school for the maximum number of days.
- This Policy is designed to help all concerned adults to enable children to attend school regularly and thus be offered the most consistent access to learning as is possible.

## SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- To communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the school.
- Maintain appropriate attendance data.
- Have appropriate registration processes in place.
- To follow up absences and lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school: initially with a first-day absence telephone call or text message.
- Inform parents/carers of what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absences.
- To have systematic and consistent daily records which chart absence and lateness.
- To report to the EWO (Educational Welfare Officer)/SAO School Attendance Officer and support their work with pupils as necessary.
- To report to the Government on attendance twice a year.
- To consistently administer the attendance procedure.
- To ensure that registers are taken twice daily: at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions
- To promote good attendance

## PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- To have children in class ready for teaching by the start of the day at 8.55 a.m.
- To inform school on **every** day of any absence.
- To request leave as far in advance as possible by completing the schools "Application for Leave of absence" form.
- To make applications for leave in writing.
- To work with the school and EWO/SAO to improve lateness and attendance.
- To avoid medical and dental appointments during the school day.

If parents, guardians or carers are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs your help in resolving
- Talk to your child's class teacher in the first instance.

## THE PROCESS FOR MONITORING ATTENDANCE

The school Attendance Officer will log instances of absence and lateness and discuss weekly with the Learning Mentors who will then pass on concerns to either the Head or Assistant Head.

Where issues persist the following will be initiated:

## Attendance policy

**Stage 1:** Where there are concerns about attendance and punctuality the school will make verbal contact with home.

**Stage 2:** If the concerns persist or attendance falls below 90% the school will write to the parents/carers.

**Stage 3:** If the concerns persist or attendance falls below 85% the school will arrange a meeting between the parent/carer, School Attendance Officer or EWO.

**Stage 4:** If the concerns persist the school will make a formal referral to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Service to deal with the on-going issues.

Should concerns persist the EWO will agree action (as above) and where necessary meet with the parents/carers. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action. See Appendix 1.

### **ABSENCES DURING TERM TIME**

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. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.]

AS OF 1ST SEPTEMBER 2013, THE RATE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL BE £60 IF PAID WITHIN 21 DAYS AND RISING TO £120 IF PAID BETWEEN 22 AND 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 advance by the parent with whom the child normally resides on the form headed 'Application for leave of absence'. These may be obtained from the school office.
- Leave of absence will only be granted where the Headteacher considers it is due to 'exceptional circumstances' such as:
  - Significant family bereavement i.e. mother (step), father (step), principle carer or sibling
  - Significant family illness to mother (step), father (step), sibling or principle carer
  - Disclosure of significant abuse where a short leave of absence may be beneficial to recovery
  - Involvement in court proceedings, either in the family courts or criminal proceedings

Parent will be informed within 7 school days as to whether the request has been authorised or unauthorised.

- 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

## Attendance policy

holidays. This is over 13 school weeks. Please ensure that your holidays are taken during this period.

### **LATENESS**

**Punctuality is an important life skill. It is also polite.**

- Children must be in class by 8.55 a.m. each day. Registers will be taken as soon as possible after that time.
- Children who arrive after 8.55 a.m. must come into the building via the main office, where they will be entered into the late book. If it is before 9.25 a.m. they will be given a Late Mark in the register, if it is after 9.25 a.m. and without an authorised reason e.g. medical appointment, then an unauthorised absence mark will be given. This equates to an absence although we are aware that the pupil is on the school premises in accordance with health and safety.
- Lateness will be monitored and the EWO / SAO will follow this up.
- If a pupil is late due to a medical appointment, they will receive an authorised absence coded 'M'. Please be advised that where possible doctors and dentists appointments are to be made outside of school hours or during school holidays.
- The school gates will be locked at 9:10 am.

Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents, guardians or carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness will be reminded by letter of the importance of good time keeping. If lateness persists parents, guardians or carers will be invited to attend the school and discuss the problem with the Learning Mentor and or School Attendance Officer.

### **SICKNESS**

- Please notify the school on each day of the absence.
- We reserve the right to request a doctor's/consultant's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness.

### **PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE**

We celebrate good attendance throughout our School by

- Providing children whose attendance is of a concern with an attendance reward card. Monitored by Learning Mentors on a weekly basis.
- Awarding a certificate for any child with 100% for the terms attendance.
- By awarding individual certificates to individual children who have 100% for each year.

### **THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER**

The Education Welfare Officer and School Attendance Officer strive to support schools, parents and pupils with the aim of ensuring and promoting good attendance and punctuality. However, the Education Welfare Service also has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness. Section 444 of the Education Act states that *"if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, the parents are guilty of an offence."*

## **Attendance policy**

Derby City Council, through the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Penalty Notice or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly and where absences are not authorised.

### **GOVERNORS**

It is the Governors legal responsibility to monitor and evaluate the attendance in their schools. The schools attendance figures are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.