



Attendance Policy

Date: 09/17

Review date: 09/18

Aims

- To maximise attendance of all children – thus supporting achievement in learning.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor, communicate and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

Headteacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and / or punctuality when it is an issue.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance. To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate recording sheet.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by Office Staff.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

Office Staff

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of SIMS.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary as directed by the Head teacher.
- To contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Headteacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- To promote the use of the 'Absence Request Form' for any parents or carers requesting absence for their child.

Education Welfare Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

Administration

- The School uses an ICT based Attendance Manager / SIMS to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.
- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are returned to the School Office after the closure of the registration period.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

Absence

Lateness

- Pupils arriving 8:50am – 9am must report to the School Office as the doors will have closed and their attendance can be recorded as Late (L).
- Children will be taken to their classes before the register has officially closed.
- The registers officially close at 9:00am and your child will be also be marked late with a 'L' as this is after the register has closed.
- Pupils arriving after 9.20 am will be marked as 'U' in the register. This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment.
- The School will phone parents by 9.30 am in the event that children are absent without explanation from a parent/guardian.

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.15am by way of telephone call to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. Office staff will contact parents on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been given.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Headteacher should be informed.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments.
- Whenever possible, parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Term time absence

From May 2013, no absence will be granted during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any absence taken, which has been applied for and declined, may result in a Penalty Notice being issued and subsequent fine of £60 (min) per parent for each child taken out of school will be incurred. Failure to pay the fine will result in Legal Proceedings.

For planned absence from school, a request for absence form should be completed for each absence. The reasons for absence will be considered individually by the Headteacher, taking into account the child's previous attendance history and the reason stated. The Headteacher may consult with the Educational Welfare Officer for advice, but the final decisions will be made by the Headteacher.

Reporting to parents and carers

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report. In order to give parents/carers a benchmark to their child's attendance to the impact upon their education, the attendance poster provided by Swindon will be used alongside this policy (Appendix 1).

Monitoring and evaluation

- Attendance data will be collected termly (six times a year) to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with: incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of unauthorised; and all children with attendance below 90%. This data will be discussed with the EWO as part of the regular meetings.
- If concerns are raised by this analysis, parent discussions will occur, either through telephone calls to the parents/carers by the Headteacher and/or formal letters stating the attendance of the child and that there is an issue.
- The Headteacher and EWO will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually and the Headteacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governors.
- The Governors will review attendance annually at its first meeting.

Frequently asked questions...

- **So is 90% attendance good?**

Any less than 95% and your child cannot do their best.

- **So what is poor attendance?**

Education Welfare Officers (EWO) work closely with school attendance and become very concerned at 85% and below, legal action may be taken in some cases.

- **What do these figures mean?**

95% attendance at the end of a school year means your child has been absent on 10 days.

90% attendance at the end of a school year means your child has been absent on 19 days.

85% attendance at the end of a school year means your child has been absent on 29 days.

- **What does 'persistent absence' mean?**

In simple terms any child that continues to have low attendance through the year will have persistent absence. The figure for persistent absence is less than 85% attendance.

- **What does 'genuine illness' mean?**

High temperatures, diarrhoea and sickness, childhood ailments e.g. measles, tonsillitis are genuine illness. A child should not be kept home with minor coughs, tummy aches and headaches etc.

- **Can I take long weekends and odd days as holidays?**

No. Too many Mondays and Fridays missed would not be good for achievement. You cannot request a holiday for a day out e.g. birthday treat.

- **What is an exceptional circumstance?**

'Exceptional' circumstances are much more likely to be unique and/or one-off situations e.g. where there has been a trauma or bereavement in the family. It is for the headteacher to decide if the circumstance is 'exceptional'.

- **What does a 'penalty notice' mean?**

The Local Authority will fine each parent £60 for each child. This means a family with two parents and two children could face a fine of £240 for unauthorised absence.

- **Can a fine be paid in instalments?**

No – a fine must be paid in full or it will double. Failure to pay at all will lead to prosecution.

Remember: If you want your child to do his/her best they must be in school at least 95% of the time. That means no more than 10 days absence in a school year.

Just a little bit late doesn't seem that much, but...

He/She is only missing just...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling that's...
10 minutes per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly half a year
20 minutes per day	1 hour 40 minutes per week	Only 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
Half an hour per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 and a half years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 and a half years



Absence Request Form

2017

Request for Absence
Please complete one form for each child

NAME OF CHILD _____ YEAR GROUP _____

Dates of notified absence: from _____ to: _____

Total number of school days requested _____

Please explain the reason for this request:

Please note: no absence will be granted during term time, unless there is an exceptional circumstance. If unauthorised leave is taken during school term time, the school may instruct the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice. These Penalty Notices amount to £60 (per parent per pupil) within 21 days or £120 (per parent per pupil) within 28 days for each unauthorised period of absence.

Is this your first request for this academic year? YES/NO

If NO, please give details:

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Please PRINT name: _____ Date: _____

In the instance where parents are separated, and there is joint responsibility, a second signature is required by the other parent.

Parent/Guardian signature: _____

Please PRINT name: _____ Date: _____

Please note: if you do not reside at the same address as your child we will contact the parent/guardian to check their agreement with the request.

Please return this form to the **School Office** for authorisation

FOR OAKHURST SCHOOL OFFICE ONLY	
Number of days requested: _____	Previous number of days taken: _____
Attendance percentage: _____	Attendance code: _____
Authorised or Unauthorised (<i>delete as applicable</i>)	Reason: _____
Refer to Local Authority to issue Penalty Notice?	YES/NO (<i>delete as applicable</i>)
Headteacher signature: _____	Date: _____

Attendance Policy Confirmation – September 2016

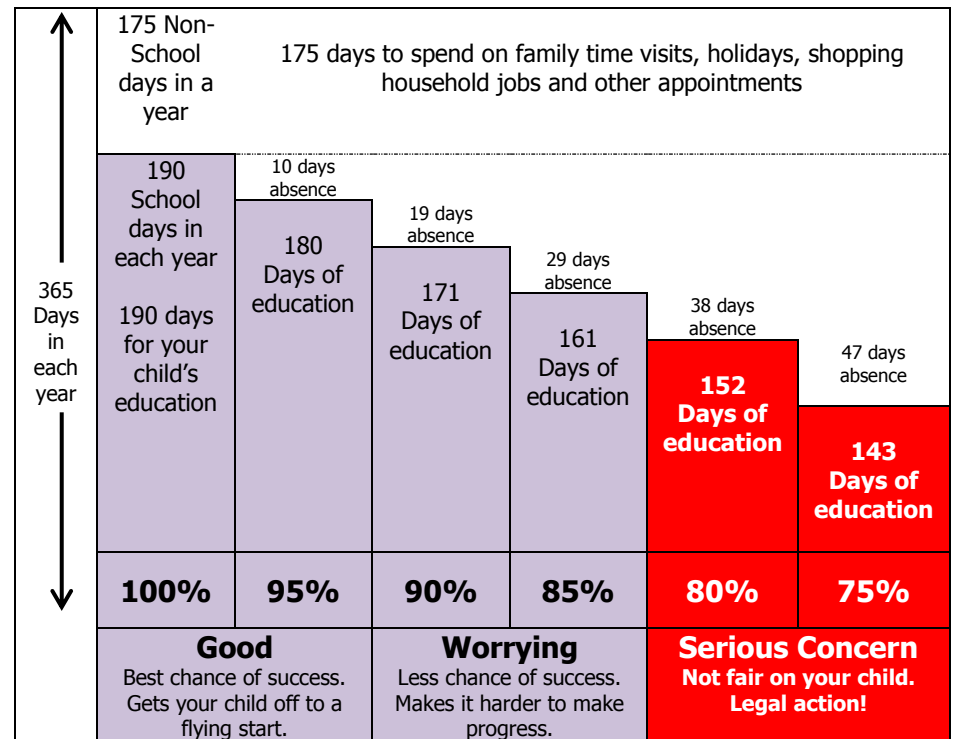
The law regarding absences from school during term-time has not changed as a result of the legal case in the Isle of Wight. Therefore there is no change to the policy at Oakhurst.

It is an offence to keep a child off school.

Parents and carers are reminded that an 'Absence Request Form' should be completed for a planned absence and submitted to the school office for the Head teacher's attention in advance.

Unauthorised absences may be referred to the Local authority and Penalty Notices issued, followed by prosecution should the fine be unpaid. As a matter of course, recurring absences are required to be referred.

The procedure is the same for authorised absences, for medical or extra-curricular activities, such as music exams or auditions. These should be supported by copies of appointment letters or medical notes so that the absence can be authorised.



If you are worried about your child's attendance, please talk to your school about it or contact The Education Welfare Service on 01793 463095.

