

# Oak Hill First School



## PUPIL ATTENDANCE

Reviewed by C&L:  
Next Review

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# PUPIL ATTENDANCE

Promoting good attendance is the responsibility of the whole Oak Hill community, thus enabling and encouraging all on roll at our school to achieve excellence.

To enable the pupils to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and on time every day that the school is open unless the reason for absence is unavoidable, as poor attendance disadvantages pupils.

## RATIONALE

1. Parent/carers of registered pupils have a legal duty under the Education Act 1996 (Section 444) to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school on a regular and full time basis. Permitting unauthorised absence from school is an offence and parents may be referred to the Worcestershire County Council Senior Education Welfare Officer for Prosecution, if the issues around the non-school attendance cannot be resolved by the use of Oak Hill attendance strategies and staff.
2. Attendance matters and statistics will be regularly reviewed by the Headteacher and members of the leadership team.
3. Oak Hill aims to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly and on time to enable them to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.
4. Regular, punctual attendance is valued and positively encouraged for all pupils.
5. Attendance is an OfSTED trigger: it has a direct relationship with the attainment of individuals and groups of pupils and the standards thereby achieved by the school. Attendance also underpins the five Every Child Matters Outcomes:
  - Be healthy
  - Stay safe
  - Enjoy and achieve
  - Make a positive contribution
  - Achieve economic wellbeing.

## AIMS

1. To improve the overall attendance of pupils at Oak Hill.
2. To improve pupils' attainment through good attendance.
3. To encourage parents:
  - To ensure their child attends school regularly
  - To ensure their child leaves in plenty of time to arrive on time
  - To support and encourage their child by attending parents' evenings and other events
  - To contact their child's class teacher, relevant AHT or Attendance Officer to discuss any concerns regarding their child's attendance
  - To work in collaboration with Oak Hill to resolve any issues that are impacting on their child's attendance.
4. To make sure attendance is a priority for everyone associated with Oak Hill including parents, pupils, teachers and governors.
5. Oak Hill will challenge the attitude of those pupils, parents and staff who give a low priority to attendance.

## PROCEDURES REGISTERS (Electronic)

1. Documents to refer to for statutory requirements and guidance in regards to completing and maintaining attendance register:
  - The Education (Pupil Registration)(England) Regulations 2006
  - Absence and Attendance Codes DCSF
  - Keeping Pupil Registers DCSF.
2. Schools have a statutory duty to keep two legal documents:
  - An admissions roll
  - An attendance register which must be kept accurately.
3. An accurate and consistent registration system is crucial both to provide a solid foundation for analysis of absence and to support any statutory interventions.
4. Attendance registers will be kept in accordance with statutory legal requirements and the Government guidelines.
5. Registers must be taken at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. Registration times are 8.45 am and at the start of the afternoon lesson.
6. On each occasion, school must record whether a child is present, absent or present at an approved educational activity.
7. No pupil should be marked present unless actually in the room when the register is called or unless he or she has been given permission to be absent by the registering teacher.
8. Every half day of absence from school has to be classified by Oak Hill as either authorised or unauthorised and the regulation codes must be used:
  - Authorised absence is where the Headteacher has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as satisfactory justification for absence
  - Examples of absence: days of religious observance, illness and medical appointments all of which require written confirmation from a parent
  - Unauthorised absence is when the justification is not acceptable, when a reason for the absence has not been received and excessive lateness will also be recorded as unauthorised
  - Examples of unauthorised absence: shopping, birthdays or child minding.
9. Spaces must not be left in the register, it is the initial responsibility of the class teacher/cover teacher to ensure the register is complete.
10. Pupils must not mark the register in any circumstances, it is a legal and auditable document, failure of its maintenance is accountable.
11. All registers will be checked and absences monitored on a regular basis by the Attendance Officer, Headteacher and Education Welfare Officer.
12. Oak Hill has a procedure in place to seek to resolve unexplained absences within two weeks.
13. If a pupil is absent from school their parent/carers should contact a member of the admin team on the first day of absence and maintain contact with the school on a daily basis throughout the absence unless otherwise agreed (e.g hospitalised cases). Please inform the office on **01527 528523**, email [attendance@oakhill.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@oakhill.worcs.sch.uk) or send a message to the **Attendance Officer on ClassDojo**.
14. Absences supported by written notes from parent/carers may not always be accepted as providing a valid reason. If this is the case, Oak Hill will notify the parents/carers.

15. In exceptional circumstances Oak Hill will request further evidence of a pupil's illness. This request will be put in writing to parents/carers.
16. Parent/carers are advised to make appointments for dentist, doctor or the optician outside school core hours where possible.

### **LATENESS**

1. Pupils must attend registration on time to be given a present mark.
2. Where a pupil arrives after the register has closed, 9.15am, this will be classed as an unauthorised absence and code 'U' will be used in the register.
3. It is the initial responsibility of the class teacher to address the issue of persistent lateness with the pupil and their parent/carer.
4. Late reports are monitored on a weekly basis by the Headteacher. Parents are informed of any concerns in writing. Continued concerns result in meetings with the Attendance Officer and then AHT and then the Headteacher and Educational Welfare officer.

### **POOR ATTENDANCE**

1. Those pupils whose attendance falls below 96% will be closely monitored and further action considered. Between 95% and 90% it is the responsibility of the Attendance Officer and class teacher to discuss the matter with the pupil/parent/carer in consultation with the Key Stage Leader. 89% and below further intervention will be required. All intervention must be documented and parents must be informed in writing that attendance overtime is now less than 90%.
2. Recognition of a pattern of absence is vital. Liaison between class teachers, Key Stage Leaders and Education Welfare Officer with support from the attendance officer will ensure a holistic approach to the cause for concern. Early involvement of parent/carer is paramount.
3. Oak Hill has a clear and escalating approach to intervention where there are concerns regarding a pupil's attendance at our school
  - Letters to parent/carer
  - Home visits
  - Meetings with parent/carers and pupils to discuss any issues
  - School mentoring
  - Parenting contracts
  - Pastoral support plan
  - Individual educational support plan
  - Pre prosecution meeting County/parent/carer/child/school.
4. If there is no improvement in a pupil's attendance following the schools' interventions, the school will refer the matter to the Worcestershire County Council Senior Education Welfare Officer for Prosecutions for advice and possible legal action.
5. The legal action to be considered in full consultation with Oak Hill:
  - To prosecute a parent/carer for failing to ensure that their child regularly attends school to the statutory requirement through the Education Act 1996, section 444(1 or 1A)
  - Application to Magistrates Court for an Education Supervision Order – to ensure that the child of compulsory school age and registered at a school attends regularly
  - Application to Magistrates Court for a Parenting Order – to enforce regular attendance following a successful prosecution by the Local Authority
  - Penalty Notice issued for an instant monetary fine - for irregular attendance.

6. If a pupil does not attend school and we are unable to make contact with the parent/s to ascertain a reason for absence we have Child Missing in Education procedures we adhere to in order to safeguard the pupil.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTS DURING TERM TIME**

Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments, as described below, came into force on 1 September 2013.

1. Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless they deem it to be exceptional circumstances.
2. Only the Headteacher at Oak Hill has the discretion to authorise leave and this will be considered on an individual basis.
3. The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.
4. Parents/carers cannot demand a leave of absence as an automatic right.
5. Parents can be fined for taking their children on a leave of absence during term time without the consent of the school.

## **Procedure**

- In the interests of safeguarding, parents/carers should complete a Request for Leave form and submit this at least four weeks prior to the requested absence.
- A decision as to whether a leave of absence request is authorised/unauthorised must be made on the basis of the content of the form.
- Oak Hill will respond in writing to the request within a fortnight.
- Parents/carers should be made aware that any unauthorised absence in respect of leave will be referred to the Worcestershire County Council Education Investigation Service for Prosecution, for appropriate intervention.
- School registers will be marked as follows:
- Pupil should be marked C/H (authorised absence) for the agreed period of leave.
- Pupil should be marked O/G (unauthorised absence) if the period of leave has not been authorised or for days taken in excess of an agreed period.

## **TRAVELLERS**

1. There is provision within the legislation to permit Travellers to remove their child/children from full time education whilst they are travelling, however this can only be done after the completion of 200 sessions (100 days) in an academic year. The parent/carer must attend school and discuss the pending period of absence with the Head of Year prior to removing the child. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise this absence or not. Should permission be granted 'T' will be entered into the pupil register system.