

Oakdene Primary School



Attendance Policy

Policy Written by: H. Lee

Ratified by Governors.....(Signed)

.....(Date)

Oakdene - Growing and Learning Together

The above statement is our Mission Statement which is what we are all aiming to achieve at Oakdene. We will try to achieve this through our aims in everything we do at Oakdene.

At Oakdene we aim :

- ✿ to enable all members of our School community to reach their full potential. (*Being Healthy; Enjoying and achieving.*)
- ✿ to prepare each child, through all aspects of School life, to become responsible citizens respecting themselves, others and the environment. (*Economic well being*)
- ✿ to become independent and highly motivated learners. (*Make a positive contribution; Enjoy and achieve*)
- ✿ to equip children to be flexible and adaptable to the modern world (*Economic well-being; Make a positive contribution*)
- ✿ for each child to feel valued, safe and confident. (*Staying Safe*)

The School Community will achieve these aims through:

- ✿ engaging all members of the School community in providing a broad, balanced and challenging curriculum for every child.
- ✿ opportunities for continuing professional development for all members of staff.
- ✿ children becoming partners in their own education and make a positive contribution to the school environment and ethos.
- ✿ opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning.
- ✿ using technology effectively to improve children's learning.
- ✿ a secure and safe environment.
- ✿ sport, exercise and healthy living.
- ✿ an enriching programme of extra curricular activities and visits.
- ✿ learning partnerships between home, school and community.

The statements in brackets relate to the 'Every Child Matters' Agenda. At Oakdene we always believe that Every Child does matter.

Introduction

Attendance at Oakdene, and all Schools, is a high priority in order to promote achievement and attainment. Research has proven that there is a strong link between attendance and attainment. Poor attendance also has a detrimental effect on overall performance and concentration, routines, friendship circles and self-esteem. Parents/ carers and all school staff work in partnership in making education a success and in ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that Oakdene has to offer. As a school, we will try to ensure that a child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted upon promptly. Parents take responsibility for children attending school punctually, at all possible times and for the safe return of a child from school.

At Oakdene Primary School we have an attendance target for all children of at least 97%. This is to ensure that all our children can have the best access to the high quality education that we provide at all times. If your child has 95% this means that your child has missed 2 sessions (1 day) per month. 90% attendance means your child has missed 1 session per week ($\frac{1}{2}$ a day), this equates to 4 weeks of missed lessons per year.

School Responsibilities

- * Communicate clearly the attendance procedure and expectations of the School.
- * Maintain and report appropriate attendance data.
- * Have appropriate registration procedures in place taking the register twice daily.
- * In order to safeguard children, the staff at Oakdene will investigate absences and lateness with a first day phone call if Parent has not informed School by 9.25 am of their child's absence.
- * Inform Parents / Carers of what constitutes authorised / unauthorised absences.
- * Report serious issues to the Educational Welfare Service and support their work with families as necessary.
- * Promote good attendance for all children to potentially increase achievement.

If the School is concerned about a child's absence the Parent will be contacted to discuss any issues which may be occurring leading to a low attendance rate and actions can be put in place to improve the attendance. 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. Please note that ultimately the Local Authority can take legal action. See Appendices 1, 2, 3.

Parent Responsibilities

- * Ensure that children are in School at 8.50am ready for learning at all possible times.
- * Contact the School by 9.25am if their child is ill (medical evidence may be requested).
- * Provide the school with a written explanation of absence on a child's return to School.
- * Avoid medical appointments during the school day if at all possible.
- * Not take Holidays in School Term Time.
- * Apply for Leave for Exceptional Circumstances on the correct form at least 4 weeks in advance (if possible) with proof of reason for absence, e.g. original wedding invitation from family member - not Mother and Father as they can arrange wedding in Holidays.
- * Work with the school and other agencies to improve lateness and attendance.

If a Parent is concerned about a Child's absence they should contact School to discuss any concerns and actions can be put in place to improve the attendance.

If a Parent does not send their child to School they are breaking the law and could be prosecuted.

Absences during Term Time

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."

The Education Welfare Service has a statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness. St Helens Council through the Education Welfare Service, may issue Fixed Penalty Notices or prosecute parents when children do not attend school regularly.

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 is £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.

Reasons a Penalty Notice can be requested by the Headteacher are:

- * Truancy
- * Parentally condoned absences
- * Unauthorised absence during Term Time
- * Repeated lateness after registration has been closed

Examples of Unauthorised Absence:

- Holidays during term time
- Family events
- Looking after siblings or family member
- Refusal to attend School

Examples of Authorised Absence:

- * Genuine illness (Medical Evidence may be requested)
- * Religious Observance
- * Medical appointments that could not be arranged outside of the school day

Application for 'Leave for Exceptional Circumstances' must be made on the official form available from the School Office or School website at least 4 weeks prior to the date of leave being requested (if possible). Parents will be informed as soon as possible after attendance, lateness and academic progress have been ascertained.

Lateness

Punctuality is an important life skill for all children to learn as soon as possible. If a child is late it disrupts class routines and the child's own learning.

- * The School gate is opened at 8.40am to ensure the safety of all our children.
- * Children come into School from 8.45am
- * The register is taken in school at 8.55am.
- * The School gate is kept open until 8.55am.
- * Any children who arrive after 8.55am must be signed into School at the main office with a reason being given in the Late Book.

- * If the arrival at School is after the registers close at 9.25am the pupil will receive a U (Unauthorised absence) if there is no medical reason why the child is late.

Medical Appointments

If a Child has to attend hospital or other medical appointment in School time they should be in School before and after the appointment. A letter / appointment card needs to be supplied to School for a copy to be made and kept with the Child's records. If at all possible, medical appointments (including opticians) should not be made in School time.

Pupils Leaving/Returning to school

If it is necessary for a pupil to leave school during the day, parents should inform the school in advance. An adult must collect the pupil and sign them out at the main office. When a pupil returns to school they must be signed back in at the main office.

Promoting Good Attendance

Parents are made aware of the importance of good attendance at the induction meeting prior to starting school and at regular school meetings.

At Oakdene Primary School we promote good attendance by including regular attendance updates on a class by class basis on our Newsletters and / or website.

100% Attendance Certificates are awarded for full attendance throughout the year (September to July).

Persistent Absence

A Persistent Absentee (PA) is defined as a pupil who has missed 10% of sessions. (One day is classed as 2 sessions). The Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted take into account the number of pupils over the PA threshold when looking at a schools performance on attendance.

We monitor attendance on a weekly basis and offer action plans to those children causing concern to improve school attendance. Support offered to children and their families could include referrals to School Nurse, Triple P Parenting, Education Welfare Officer, Children and Young People Services, Behaviour Improvement Team (BIT).

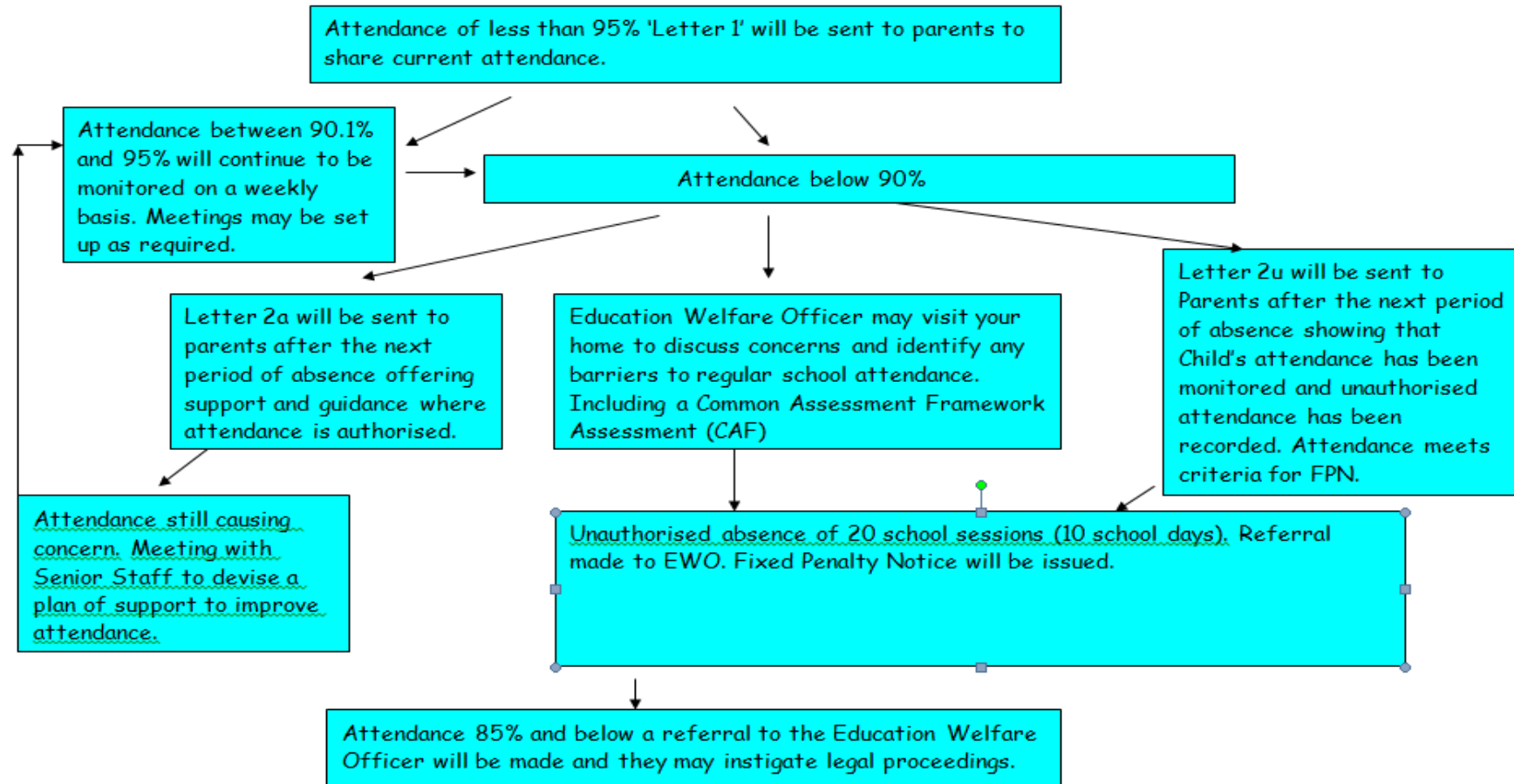
Parental Responsibility:

Throughout this policy the term 'parent' represents one parent, both parents, and carer with whom the child resides. As a parent, it is your responsibility to ensure your child attends school daily and arrives on time to receive an education. This responsibility is outlined in the Education Act 1996.

The legislation relating to non-attendance applies to all parents who fall within the definition set out in section 576 of the Education Act 1996. This defines a parent as:

- * All Natural parents, whether they are married or not.
- * Any person who, although they are not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person.
- * Any person who, although they are not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Oakdene Primary School
Challenging Absences



Oakdene Primary School
Punctuality Flow Chart

8:45am Pupils should be on school playground
8:50am Bell is rung and registers are taken
8.55am - Registers taken
9:25am Registration closes

Pupils arriving after 8:55am enter school at the main entrance and sign in at the office. Time and reason to be recorded in Signing In book by Parent / Guardian and on Electronic Register (Sims) by Office Staff

Pupils arriving between 8:55am and 9:25am will be recorded as 'L' (Late)

Pupils arriving after 9:25am will be recorded as 'U' (Late after register closed).

School will review punctuality on a half termly basis, unless identified during the term as a concern.

School will send letters to parents sharing concerns regarding pupil's poor punctuality

If improvements have not been made, Parents will be invited to an Attendance Action Plan meeting to devise a support plan.

If punctuality continues to be a cause for concern, a Penalty Notice will be issued to those pupils who meet the criteria

Referrals to Education Welfare Officer where appropriate

Medical Appointments

All Medical Appointments should be arranged outside the school day. If this is not possible the below procedure is to be followed.

Parents to inform Office staff of the reason, date and time of medical appointments

Parents to provide appointment card/ letter for medical appointment when appropriate. To be copied by Office Staff

Pupils arriving at school from a medical appointment **must** sign in at the main office

Pupils being taken from school to attend a medical appointment during the school day **must** sign out at the main office

Medical Appointments will be recorded as 'M' (**Authorised Absences**) in the school register by Office Staff

