

The Oaks Community Primary School

Attendance Policy



@The Oaks, everyone is celebrated

Community is at the heart of everything we do. By exploring a world of endless opportunities, through questioning and challenge, children develop a love of lifelong learning. Enabling environments empower every child, helping children to belong, through a brave and balanced curriculum. We are: Ready; Respectful and Responsible in all that we do. We Aspire, Achieve and Appreciate to realise our ambitions. Together we flourish and grow. Every encounter is an opportunity to develop independence, confidence and resilience. Dedicated and determined staff go above and beyond to help children to become unstoppable.

INTRODUCTION

- THIS POLICY WAS DEVELOPED through a process of consultation with the relevant professionals.
- IT WILL BE REVIEWED EVERY TWO YEARS

Attendance Co-ordinator: Head teacher

Education Welfare Officer: David Williams

Attendance Policy Group members:

Name	Responsibility
Millie Ridley	To monitor the attendance throughout the school
Millie Ridley	To monitor the attendance situation of individual children or young people
Millie Ridley	To raise the level of attendance of those children or young people identified as being at risk
Lindsey Trafford-Haigh	The welfare of children or young people in school
FGB/ HT'S Reports	To keep a check on the general situation
David Williams	To support the school in achieving its objectives by following the Local Authority Guidelines.

Attendance Policy Statement:

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life. It is important to ensure that our most vulnerable pupils are given the same opportunities, which may mean extra support in certain cases.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parent(s)/carer(s), local community and the Education Welfare Service can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention if a problem is identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and will liaise with home and partner agencies if this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by the school. The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal opportunities for all.

NOTE: At The Oaks we take a trauma informed approach to supporting parents and children. If there is an identified need such as a pupil being a Young Carer support will be put in place to ensure a vulnerable or disadvantaged pupil has the same opportunities to attend school as their peers.

Aims:

- To improve the quality of school life

- To create a culture in which good attendance is 'normality'
- To demonstrate to pupils, parent(s)/carer(s) and staff that the school values good attendance and to recognise that good regular attendance is an achievement in itself
- To be consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions
- To value the individual and be socially and educationally inclusive

Objectives:

- To involve the children or young people more in their school attendance
- To improve communication with parent(s)/carer(s) about regular school attendance
- All school staff to continue to take responsibility for children or young people's attendance
- To recognise the important role of class teachers and learning mentors in promoting and monitoring good attendance
- To ensure time and organisation within the school to enable the AIMS and OBJECTIVES to be met
- Effective working relationship with Education Welfare Service, and the reporting of half-termly figures to the service

Targets:

- To have an effective means of collecting and monitoring attendance information
- To discuss the settings of targets for the school with the Education Welfare Officer and the School Improvement partner
- To ensure that such data is available and used effectively by school managers and staff in conjunction with the EWO
- To agree specific targets for individuals, groups, years and the whole school in a context of all known relevant factors and record these in the School Attendance Plan
- To target resources and implement where most appropriate and to undertake this within a reasonable time frame
- To keep parent(s)/carer(s), pupils and governors informed of policy and practice
- To ensure that the school is aware of government targets which may have been set for some vulnerable groups, such as Looked After Children or young people, which includes a daily Welfare call to check the registration mark of Looked After children and further action if a Looked After child exceeds the normal target of no more than 25 days absence.

Consultation Process:

1. School Staff:

The attendance group will be invited to a staff meeting to discuss this policy and make any changes, which are deemed supportive of the aims of the policy.

2. The Governing Body:

A draft policy will be distributed to all Governors to discuss this policy and make any changes which are deemed supportive of the aims of the policy. The final policy, after consultation will be presented for approval to the whole Governing Body.

3. The Parent(s)/carer(s):

Parent(s)/carer(s) will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- When their children first start at our school
- Through newsletters
- At parent(s)/carer(s) evenings

4. The Children or young people:

Children or young people will be advised of our policy on attendance:

- In assemblies
- In the classroom
- During appropriate areas of the curriculum.

Procedure:

- Children or young people are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:
 - - Authorised (where the school approves pupil absence)
 - - Unauthorised (where the school will not approve absence)
- It is expected that parent(s)/carer(s) or carers will provide an explanation if the child or young person is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This can be by letter, telephone, personally at the office or by appointment
- If contact, explaining the child or young person's absence, fails to be made by parent(s)/carer(s) or carers, then the school will contact the home by telephone on the initial day, following this with a letter after 3 days of unexplained absence. **This contact needs to be recorded in the register.**
 - The head teacher will regularly remind parent(s)/carer(s) of the importance of good attendance and punctuality
 - During assemblies there are weekly class attendance and punctuality trophies
 - Children or young people with 100% attendance will be rewarded by the school in a celebration assembly at the end of year with an additional special recognition award. In February each year children who meet the school target of 94% receive a prize, another prize is awarded along with a good attendance badge for all children meeting the school target.

Identification & Referral

- Identification is made by the class teacher (cause for concern)
- Concerns are passed to the person responsible for contacting parent(s)/carer(s)
- Person responsible will contact parent(s)/carer(s) with letter 1
- Following the letter, there will be four weeks' monitoring of the child or young person's attendance
- If there is no improvement, at this point, attendance letter 2 may be sent and parent(s)/carer(s) can be invited in for a meeting
- You may, after four weeks' monitoring, inform parent(s)/carer(s) you will refer to the Education Welfare Service.

- Reinforce parental duty to ensure full school attendance
- If attendance has improved over the last four weeks, you may continue to monitor attendance
- At this point you would refer to Education Welfare Service if attendance has not improved and you may feel a final warning letter appropriate at this point
- The referral to the Education Welfare Service will consist of the referral form, copies of all correspondence to parent(s)/carer(s) and a print out of the child or young person's attendance certificate.

Completing the Register

- The twice-daily requirement to register pupils can and should be perceived as an opportunity for the school to receive children or young people formally from home, and serve as an introduction to the session
- The marking of registers never becomes so routine that its importance is lost
- Incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable for several reasons. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils; they are legal documents **that may be required in a court of law**, for example as evidence in prosecutions for non-attendance at school
- Registers are required to be marked by Class Teachers on SIMS.
- The register should be marked using the symbols advised by DCSF and Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Lateness

School begins at 8.50am and all pupils are expected to be in school for registration at this time. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others.

Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

Pupils returned to school by Truancy Patrols

The school will have in place a procedure for pupils who are returned to school by a Truancy Patrol.

Family Holidays during term time

Parents are strongly advised to refrain from taking their children on holiday during term time. Parents do not have an automatic right to remove their child from school during term time for the purpose of a holiday and should be aware that under new government legislation this will incur a fine. If you have taken your child on holiday in term-time without the school's consent you could receive a fine of £60 per child. If the fine is not paid within 21 days it is increased to £120, and will need to be paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid then court action can be taken against you.

You would be fined (under Section 444(1)) of the Education Act for failing to make sure that your children attend school regularly.

Penalty Notices may be considered appropriate in the following circumstances:

At least 10 sessions (5 school days) lost due to unauthorised absence during the current term. These do not need to be consecutive.

Persistent late arrival at school, i.e. after the register has closed, in the current term. "Persistent" means at least 10 sessions of late arrival

Fines can increase to a maximum of £1,000 per parent per child plus costs. If you have already been found guilty of failing to make sure that your child attends school regularly, then the fine could be increased to £2,500 per parent per child plus costs, or a 3 month prison sentence.

Parent(s)/carer(s) are strongly urged to avoid booking a family holiday during term time. **Parent(s)/carer(s) do not have the right to take their child or young person out of school for such a holiday.** School will not authorise any holidays in term time except in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Head Teacher, all such cases should be discussed with the Head teacher. A child or young person who is absent longer than 10 days after an agreed return date, can legally be removed from the school roll and may be liable to prosecution.

What can parent(s)/carer(s) do to help?

- Let the school know as soon as possible why your child or young person is away
- Send a note when your child returns to school
- Try to make appointments outside school time
- Do not allow your child to have time off school unless it is really necessary

If you are worried about your child's attendance at school what can you do?

- Talk to your child; it may be something simple
- Talk to the head teacher and staff at the school
- Talk to the Education Welfare Service

You may contact the Education Welfare Officer, who will work with you and the school to resolve the situation Tel number 0151 357 6859

The school aims to have ALL children or young people attending regularly and punctually and parent(s)/carer(s) need to know that should their child fail to attend in this way then the matter will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Parent(s)/carer(s) need to be aware that Cheshire Schools are operating the Fast Track Prosecution System in co-operation with the Education Welfare Service.

Parent(s)/carer(s) need to be aware that Cheshire West and Chester Council in conjunction with Schools are operating Fixed Penalty Notices for non attendance.

In developing this Attendance Policy we have taken into account the fact that Cheshire West and Chester is an ethnically diverse community. The school has incorporated practice, which guards against disadvantaging any sections of the community. Improving the performance of underachieving pupils is a key priority in the Education Development Plan. This aims to improve the attainment of minority pupils across the County. Schools are aware and take into account the need for all public authorities to re-examine and make changes to their practice in promoting genuine multi-racial partnership.

The school understands the need for on-going communication with parent(s)/carer(s)/carers and pupils regarding this policy, particularly those new to the school.

This policy is available in alternative format on request.

Agreed by:

Chair of Governors - Nicholas Hebson September 2023

Headteacher - Louise Roberts September 2023

To be reviewed September 2025