



ORCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

Orchard Primary School **Attendance Policy**

All children are entitled to receive an efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs that they may have. It is the joint responsibility of the school and parents/carers to ensure that our children receive that education.

Orchard Primary School expects all pupils to attend school every day that the school is open, in full school uniform, arriving on time and remaining for the full school day.

Only the Head Teacher has the right to authorise absence. The school will not do this if they believe that a pupil's attainment is being significantly impaired by his/her level of attendance.

As part of the school attendance policy, referrals will be made to our attendance advisory service (SEAAS) where there are concerns about a pupil's attendance or punctuality which has not been resolved by the school and/or when the school believes that the pupil's attainment is significantly impaired by his/her level of attendance.

Punctuality

The school day is from 9.00am – 3.15pm and registration from 9.00am each morning.

The school requires that all pupils attend school on time and ready to learn. We would therefore ask you to ensure that your child arrives in the school playground by 8.45am in good time for morning registration.

Lateness is disruptive to the class, causes embarrassment for your child and will have a negative impact on his/ her attainment.

In accordance with our policy on good punctuality, if your child is persistently late for school and this affects their attendance, it is possible that a Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent for each child who has poor punctuality, as stipulated in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007.

With effect from 1st September 2013, standard information provided with each Penalty Notice states that £60 is payable within 21 days of the Notice being issued, rising to £120 if paid between the 22nd day and 28th day. If neither of these sums is paid within these periods, liability to prosecution will arise.

Sickness

Your child should attend school in good health. We ask that you notify the school on the first day of absence (before 9.30am) if your child is unable to attend school because of illness and that you provide a letter of explanation when your child returns to school.

The school is very concerned for the welfare of our pupils. Where there are persistent or prolonged periods of sickness, the school may refer the matter to our Attendance Advisory Service so that the correct advice and assistance can be put in place to support the family through this difficult period.

There may be occasions where medical evidence is needed to support the reasons for your child's absence from school. The school and our Attendance Advisory Service will not approach your doctor to obtain that evidence. It is your responsibility as a parent/carer to provide a medical certificate or doctor's letter, as appropriate.

Registers

The electronic register must be completed promptly by the class teacher by 9.20am for the morning session and 1.35pm (infants) and 1.50pm (juniors). A late arrival constitutes a pupil arriving after 9.00am when the school gates are closed. The pupil must report to the school office. If there are any unauthorized absences the school will endeavour to contact the Parent/Carer for a valid reason on the day of absence.

Attendance Register

All attendance data will be processed on a daily basis via SIMS in the classroom. An outturn of this information can be accessed at any point and is a valuable asset to monitor attendance both short and long term. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the class register is completed accurately with the relevant codes 'I' for attendance and 'N' for an absence. The Office will then apply other relevant codes according to reasons for absence. Any information regarding absences should be passed to the office by 9.20am.

Leave of absence

A pupil shall not be considered to have an unauthorised absent from school ...

- At any time when he/she was prevented from attending by reason of sickness, as described above or any unavoidable cause. An unavoidable cause is an incident of a serious nature in the immediate family of the child

concerned. Where something of this nature has occurred, we ask that the family contact the school at the earliest opportunity, so that the school can provide support, the length of absence from school can be agreed and that the pupil can be correctly registered.

- On any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs. The school recognises all religious beliefs and actively seeks to support families on these occasions. Where a family wishes to exercise this entitlement, the school asks that the family contact the school in writing at the earliest opportunity, requesting a religious observance day, so that the length of absence from school can be agreed and that the pupil can be correctly registered.

Holidays during Term time

It is a myth that parents are entitled to take their children out of school, for a holiday, during term time.

Amendments to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006**, in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**, which came into effect on 1st September 2013, make clear that head teachers **may not grant any holidays in term time** and may only grant a leave of absence during term time if there are exceptional circumstances.

There is no definitive list of exceptional circumstances. The Head Teacher will treat each case on an individual basis and determine what is an exceptional circumstance and the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

If a parent/carer wishes to take a child out of school during term time, they should seek permission, in writing, from the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity.

If an unauthorised absence from school during term time is taken, the Head Teacher will consider issuing a Penalty Notice to each parent for each child that is taken out of school.

With effect from 1st September 2013, amendments to the Penalty Notice Regulations, as stipulated in the **Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** state that where a Penalty Notice is issued, £60 is payable within 21 days of the Notice being issued, rising to £120 if paid between the 22nd day and 28th day. If neither of these sums is paid within these periods, the school will ask the Local Authority to consider a prosecution for an offence contrary to Sec. 444(1) Education Act 1996.

Equal Opportunities

The school will endeavour to make all communication and procedures as clear and simple as possible. Where necessary communication may be translated, an interpreter involved or staff will explain or read correspondence to Parent/Carers.

Rewards

At Orchard Primary School we actively promote attendance and where possible take opportunities to reward classes and individual children for good attendance. This takes place every Monday in Assembly where one infant class and one junior class will be awarded 'Best class attendance' and receive a class certificate and trophy (juniors), class certificate and puppet – Timmy Time (infants). At the end of every week on a Friday, children with 100% attendance for the school week will receive an individual sticker. The End of Term Assembly will promote excellent attendance in the form of a certificate issued to children with 98% and 100% attendance in each class.

In conclusion

School attendance and pupil progress and attainment are closely linked.

A child missing an average of one school day per week, over their school life, only has 80% attendance. This is the equivalent to missing 2 full school years!!

It is extremely important that all of our pupils attend school on a regular basis, so that they receive the education to which they're entitled. This ensures that our pupils have the best opportunities in later life.

Please don't leave it until it is too late! If you are having problems with your child's school attendance, make an appointment to speak to a member of staff or our attendance advisory service, who will provide advice and strategies to assist.

Your co-operation is important.

We all want the best education for our children.

Reviewed Summer Term 2014

To be reviewed Summer Term 2015