



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

At Orsett CE Primary School we believe that for a child to reach their full educational achievement, a high level attendance is essential. Every opportunity will be used to convey to pupils and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Attendance is subject to Education Laws and this policy is written within this context.

This Policy will aim to;

- ⇒ demonstrate a strong attendance ethos
- ⇒ demonstrate effective, non bureaucratic systems for monitoring attendance
- ⇒ clearly state procedures for parents/carers to follow
- ⇒ use attendance data and other information to improve school and pupil performance
- ⇒ promote the importance and legal requirements of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- ⇒ intervene early when individual pupil absence gives concern
- ⇒ have support systems in place for vulnerable pupils
- ⇒ reward and celebrate good and improved attendance
- ⇒ make best use of additional support for pupils and parents/carers with greatest needs.

Legal interventions

- ⇒ Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013. These amendments will come in force on the 1st September 2013.
- ⇒ Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and respond to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school, or otherwise.
- ⇒ A child is of compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday. A child ceases to be of compulsory school on the last Friday in June of the school year in which they reach the age of 16.
- ⇒ The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 require schools and academies to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session. The register must record whether the pupil was:
 - Present
 - Absent
 - Present at approved educational activity or
 - Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- ⇒ Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school, their parents/carers are guilty of an offence.

Penalty Notices (Anti – Social Behaviour Act 2013)

- ⇒ Penalty Notices will be considered when;
 - A pupil is absent from school for the purpose of a holiday in term time and the absence has not been authorised.
 - A pupil has accumulated at least ten sessions of unauthorised absence and further unauthorised absence has occurred following written warning to improve.
- ⇒ Amendments have been made to the 2007 Regulations in the Education (Penalty Notices) (England (Amendments) Regulations 2013. These amendments, as described below will come into force on 2013.
- ⇒ The 2007 regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at a school or academy, or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of exclusion. From the 1st September 2013, parents must pay within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster in prosecutions.
- ⇒ The procedure for issuing Penalty Notices will be in accordance with the Thurrock Local Authority's Penalty Notice Protocol.

Categorising absence

- ⇒ Absence can only be authorised by the school and cannot be authorised by parents /carers.
- ⇒ All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received.
- ⇒ Parents/carers should advise the school by telephone on the first day of absence and provide the school with an expected day of return.

Illness

- ⇒ Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness.

Medical/ Dental Appointments

- ⇒ Parents/carers are advised where possible to make medical and dental appointments outside the school day. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school part of the day.
- ⇒ Parents/carers should show the appointment card to the school to confirm the appointment.

Other Authorised Circumstances

- ⇒ This relates to occasions where there is a cause for absence due to exceptional circumstances, for example family bereavement or part time timetable agreed as part of a reintegration package.

Leave of absence

Term – time holiday

- ⇒ The [Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) allowed Headteachers to grant leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday during term time in “special circumstances” of up to ten school days leave per year. The regulations also allowed head teachers to grant extended leave for more than five days in exceptional circumstances.
- ⇒ Amendments to the 2006 regulations have removed references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**. Head teachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave of absence for exceptional circumstances is granted.

Deletions from the Register

- ⇒ In accordance with Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, pupils will only be deleted from register when one of the following circumstances applies:
 - The school is replaced by another school/academy on a School Attendance Order
 - The pupil has ceased to be of compulsory age
 - Permanent exclusion has occurred and the procedures have been completed
 - The death of a pupil
 - Transfer between schools or academies
 - Pupil withdrawn to be educated outside the school system
 - Failure to return from an extended holiday after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil
 - A medical condition prevents their attendance and return to the school before ending compulsory school- age
 - 20 days continuous unauthorised absence and both the local authority and school have tried to locate the pupil
 - A pupil has left the school but is known where he/she has gone after both the school and the local authority have tried to locate the pupil.
- ⇒ The school will follow the Local Authority's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.



Roles and Responsibilities

- ⇒ At Orsett CE Primary School we believe it is essential to foster a spiritual and moral view of life in all our children and we aim to provide a quality of education, within a safe, stimulating Christian environment.
- ⇒ Together, with a sense of worth and a genuine concern for others, we aim to give every child the opportunity to develop and enjoy his or her maximum potential, not only in academic work, but also in creative, practical, sporting and social activities, so as to prepare them to understand and live a healthy and productive lifestyle.
- ⇒ At Orsett CE Primary School the Headteacher and the Governing Body have overall responsibility for attendance.
- ⇒ The day to day responsibility for managing Attendance lies with the Administrative Assistant.

The Governors support the school with promotion of good attendance by;

- ⇒ Having a named Governor with a responsibility for attendance.

The Senior Leadership Team aim to ensure there is a whole school approach, which reinforces good attendance.

The Leadership team will;

- ⇒ Annually monitor and review the Attendance Policy and make certain all staff are aware of it.
- ⇒ Ensure the school has strategies in the place for collecting and analysing attendance data.
- ⇒ Report attendance to the local Authority, DFE and the school's governing body as required.

- ⇒ The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that the whole school is involved in reinforcing good attendance through;
 - Promoting the importance of good attendance to parents/carers and pupils through regular letters and information sent home.
 - Seeking to promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and parents/carers during assemblies and at parent/carers events e.g. Parents' Evenings, Annual Reports
 - Ensuring safe and structured learning environments for pupils.
 - Delivering informative lessons that are set to pupil's needs
 - Providing extracurricular activities
 - Ensuring all staff have strategies in place for recording, monitoring and responding to students with attendance concerns.

The Parents/Carers of our pupils are asked to support the school and instil the value of education progress.

- ⇒ Talking to their child about school life and taking a positive interest in their child's educational progress.
- ⇒ Contacting the school before 9.00am if their child is absent to let us know the reason why and the expected date of return.
- ⇒ Trying to avoid unnecessary absences- wherever possible making medical appointments outside of the school hours.
- ⇒ Asking the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties and informing the school of any circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.

Orsett CE Primary School Approach to Attendance

- ⇒ Attendance is monitored on a weekly basis by the Headteacher
- ⇒ The class with the highest **weekly** attendance is awarded the Attendance Cup
- ⇒ Pupils with **100%** attendance during a **term** receive a certificate which is presented at Achievement Assembly
- ⇒ Pupils with **100%** attendance over the **full academic year** receive an additional certificate which is presented at Achievement Assembly
- ⇒ Discussions with parents take place for pupils with a long term absence and work is provided as appropriate
- ⇒ Parents of pupils whose attendance falls below 90% in a term receive a letter outlining the consequences of poor attendance including a fact sheet on 'Days Misses'.
- ⇒ The Headteacher holds meetings with parents where their child's attendance is a cause for concern
- ⇒ A warning letter is sent for unauthorised absence. **Penalty notice may be applied**
- ⇒ If there are serious concerns over attendance at this level and the pupil is at risk of becoming persistently absent (PA) the Educational Welfare Officer will become involved and will take the lead role in working with parents/carers to ensure they support their child's attendance.
- ⇒ Any term time holiday requests are followed with a meeting with the Headteacher to ascertain whether the leave can be granted under 'exceptional circumstances'. Below are examples:

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Examples of any exceptional circumstances where leave may be granted during term time

- Funeral of parent, grandparent or sibling Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence- up to a maximum of 3 days.
- Serious illness of a close relative
- Out of school programmes such as music, arts or sport operating at a high standard of achievement and agreed by the LA – as appropriate.
- Time- off relating to Child Entertainment Performances, subject to a license being issued by Education Social Work Service
- Religious observance – The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c), states “on any day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which his/her parent belongs”.
- Weddings of parents and siblings – weddings can be arranged at weekends or during school holidays; however we acknowledge that there are times when the dates are dependent on other factors, such as the needs of the couple getting married
- Scheduled holiday leave from the parent/carers company. This must be accompanied by a formal letter from the company confirming that this is the only time Annual Leave can be given.
- However, if current attendance is below 90% **none** of the above will be authorised.

Examples of circumstances NOT considered as exceptional

- Holidays abroad for the purpose of visiting a sick relative, excepting where that person is seriously ill. Medical evidence may be requested.
- Holidays taken in term time due to lower cost/parental work commitments.

Conclusion

Orsett CE Primary School will encourage parents/cares to ensure that their child/ren have high levels of attendance and will work in partnership with families where there are attendance issues.

We believe that good attendance will ensure that our children at Orsett have access to the highest quality education which in turn will enable them to become effective citizens of our future..

Therefore, we will systematically work together to ensure that any attendance issues are dealt with at the earliest opportunity.

Approved by the Governing Body: June 2016

Review date: Summer 2018