



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction

At Oaktree we aim to provide the highest possible quality of education for our pupils as we prepare them to lead what we hope will be happy, fulfilling and independent lives. However, for our curriculum to have the maximum effect and ensure pupils develop and progress, it is vital that they take full advantage of what is offered to them by attending school as much as possible.

The needs of our pupils are such that they require a high level of adult intervention in order to progress. It is therefore important that pupils miss as few days as possible during the school year, and why absence other than on medical grounds (ill-health, hospital appointments etc.) is actively discouraged. Parents have a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that this is the case. We try to foster strong, positive home-school relationships, and will always offer support to families who are experiencing difficulties which may impinge on their child's attendance.

Family Holidays

Family holidays should not be taken during term time. In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher has the legal authority to authorise absence for up to 10 days in a year, but a written request from parents must be received before this can be considered. A family holiday in term time will not be authorised if attendance was a problem or exams could be affected.

Exclusions

To effectively meet the varied and increasingly complex needs of our pupils, it is essential that we provide a relevant, as well as broad and balanced, curriculum. We also aim to employ only the highest quality teaching and support staff to ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively, and within a supportive, caring environment. The intention is quite simple: to provide a happy and challenging school which pupils *want* to attend, and where they want to achieve well. We also try to keep exclusions to a minimum, preferring to keep children at school on 'internal exclusion' where they can be closely supervised and given help with their learning, rather than sending them home.

Monitoring

Pupil attendance (and punctuality) is closely monitored by the school, and registers are taken at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. The Headteacher reports attendance figures termly to the governing body including authorised and un-authorised absences.

Absence procedures

Parents are asked to contact the school as early in the day and as soon as possible if their child is going to be absent or late. Both transport and the school office should be telephoned directly so that the reason for absence or lateness can be accurately recorded. If no contact has been received – especially if the absentee is an independent traveller – parents will be telephoned in the morning, usually as close to the start of the school day as possible. Parents will be required to get students to school where there is not an acceptable reason for their absence or an unauthorised absence mark will be given. Where possible, parents should inform us in advance of appointments needing 'time off' via the home-school book. Medical appointments should only be for part of the day unless the pupil requires substantial treatment. A copy of the appointment letter must be shown to school.

For any absence, a written letter must be brought into school explaining the reason upon a pupil's return.

Pupils causing concern

Parents are contacted whenever attendance/punctuality is becoming a concern. Punctuality of independent travellers is monitored daily - measures may be put into place, such as a call to parents when child arrives or to check if they have left home and advice given to the pupil and parents as to how to avoid lateness where this is a concern. The school's attached Education Welfare Officer (E.W.O.) visits the school regularly to check class registers and monitor attendance. Any problems we may be experiencing are discussed and appropriate action is agreed/taken.

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