



Inspire, challenge, achieve, together.

Attendance Policy

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Oakfield Primary School in ensuring that each child reaches their maximum potential. We are determined in the development of excellent physical and emotional health and well-being, and for all of our children to take great pride in being a pupil at Oakfield. Our attendance policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils that are registered at our school, on the school website. This policy is written in accordance with the DfE's 'School Attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities' August 2020, Improving School attendance: support for schools and local authorities, Keeping Children Safe in Education and Article 28 of the UNCRC .

At Oakfield we pride ourselves with building and maintaining positive relationships with parents and carers and we encourage all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality. At Oakfield we recognise that ***"parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly"*** (DfE 1999).

At Oakfield we strive for **at least 97% attendance** with 0% unauthorised absence to ensure all children are safe and are able to reach their full potential.

Aims & Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all parents, staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this policy we aim to:

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Achieve a minimum of 97% attendance for all pupils, with the exception of those with chronic health issues.
- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and are valued by the school.
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education.
- Ensure that our policy applies to Nursery and Reception (under 5) age children in order to promote good habits from an early age.
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff and North Lincolnshire Education and Inclusion Service so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.
- Continue our rigorous monitoring of attendance and punctuality and ensure consistency in communicating with parents and carers when attendance and punctuality issues arise.
- Recognise the key role of **all staff** in promoting good attendance.

Responsibility of Parents/Carers

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

Punctuality

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

- To ensure that their child / children arrive at school on time.
- To ensure that children who are late i.e. after 8:50am should report to the school office to sign in. Records are kept of the pupils who are late, via the attendance register on Scholar Pack and CPoms.
- To ensure children are collected promptly at the end of the school day (3.15 pm) and that necessary arrangements are in place for the journey home. If these differ from the child's normal arrangements, the class teacher and school office should be made aware of this. We will monitor and details of children who are continually not collected in time.

Absences

It is a statutory requirement of the school that accurate attendance records are kept. The school has to provide the Department for Education (DfE) with information about authorised and unauthorised absence annually. Attendance figures must be recorded on each child's individual school report.

Staff will meet children on the playgrounds specific to their year group and bring children into school at 8.45am.

It is the parent/carers responsibility:

- To notify the school on the first day of absence before 9:00am or as soon as possible. Parents must report an absence by telephoning the school office on 01724 842246, preferably speaking to the School Attendance Officer.
- To provide medical evidence where possible, on the child's return to school.
- To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged for outside school hours. Where this is not possible, parents are expected to provide evidence of the appointment in advance, and the child should attend school before/after the appointment.
- To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g. a sick parent/carer.

Parents/carers of children for whom we do not know the reason for absence will be contacted after 9:10am when the register closes.

Absence for Holidays

Parents/carers are expected to take their children on holiday during the school holidays to minimise the impact of missing education.

If there are exceptional circumstances, parents/carers must complete a leave of absence request form in advance of the trip (ideally at least 4 weeks prior). These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Head Teacher, and they will use their discretion whilst applying DFE and LA guidance.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To obtain a leave of absence form from the school office.
- To complete and submit the form in advance of the period of absence (ideally 4 weeks prior).

If parents/carers decide to take a holiday without the Head Teachers authorisation, the child's absences will be marked as unauthorised. **Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued by the Education and Inclusion Service for unauthorised holiday absence during term time. This fine is payable per child, per parent.**

Absence for Other Reasons

Absences for reasons such as religious observance or close family bereavement may be authorised by the Head Teacher. These requests must be discussed with the school.

It is the parent/carer's responsibility:

- To inform the office, in writing, of the need for leave in circumstances which are known in advance.
- To inform the school as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur which prevent a family bringing a child to school, so that the appropriate code can be recorded in the register.

Unexplained Absence

Parents of a child / children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by a member of the Attendance Team to discuss their child's attendance in the first instance. If no contact can be made by telephone, a visit to the child's address will be made by the Attendance Team. If no contact can be made, or a satisfactory reason for absence has not been received, a referral will be made by the Attendance Team to North Lincolnshire Education and Inclusion Service. When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the parent/carers will be investigated and may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority.

It is the parent / carers responsibility:

- To report any absences promptly, stating the reason for absence
- To ensure their child receives a full time education

Children Missing in Education

If a child is absent (unexplained) for up to 3 consecutive days, a visit by the Attendance Team will be made to the child's address. If there is no answer, a letter asking for an explanation of their absence will be put through their letter box. If no contact has been made to the school then the child will be classed as Missing in Education (CME) and the Attendance Team will notify the Education and Inclusion Officer.

It is the parent / carers responsibility:

- To report any absences promptly, stating the reason for absence
- To ensure your child receives a full time education

Persistent Lateness and Late Collection

Children who repeatedly attend school late after 8:45 am or are repeatedly collected from school after 3.15 pm will be brought to the attention of the Attendance Officer. A phone call will be made in the first instance by a member of the Attendance Team to remind parents of their legal obligations and to offer support if required. If, after this phone call a significant improvement has not been made to their child's punctuality, a letter will be issued to the parents/carers of these children with an invitation to meet with the Attendance Team and be directed through the Attendance Guidance for Parents and to create a Parent Contract with the Attendance Team. If, after several reviews over an agreed period attendance has not significantly improved, a referral will be made by the School Attendance Officer to the Education and Inclusion Service.

Parents/carers should note that children who arrive late after 9:10am are given a 'U' code, which is the equivalent of an unauthorised absence and this will affect the child's attendance figures. Fixed penalty notices may be issued to parents/carers whose children persistently arrive after this time.

Poor and Persistent Absence

Attendance, lateness and late collection is monitored daily by the School Attendance Officer and all incidences are recorded on C-Poms. Poor or persistent absence is defined as a pupil missing more than 10% of their possible sessions. Where poor and persistent absence is recognised by the Attendance Team at

their fortnightly meetings, a phone call is made in the first instance by a member of the Attendance Team to explain the importance of good attendance and offer support if needed. If, after the phone call has been made, a significant improvement in attendance has not occurred over an agreed period, a further phone call will be made by a member of the Attendance Team to create an attendance contract to support rapid and improved attendance. If, after several reviews over an agreed period attendance has not significantly improved, a referral will be made by the School Attendance Officer to the Education and Inclusion Service.

Role of the Attendance Team

At Oakfield Primary we strive to achieve the best outcomes for all our children, with regular attendance at school being at the forefront of our mission. Therefore our attendance team consists of: the Assistant Head, School Attendance Officer and Pastoral Lead. The role of the team is:

- To communicate effectively and promote the importance of punctuality and regular attendance to parents and pupils
- To communicate attendance figures termly to parents and carers (parents evenings in the Autumn and Spring terms and the annual report in Summer term)
- To monitor attendance, lateness and late collection rigorously and with regularity (daily by the Attendance Officer and teaching staff and fortnightly meetings with the Attendance Team)
- To investigate absence which exceeds more than 10%, and to hold meetings with parents / carers of these pupils as required.
- To investigate and follow up regular lateness and late collection.
- To investigate and follow up any unexplained absence which exceeds more than 3 consecutive days.
- To ensure parents are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school.
- To provide support for parents whose children have persistent absence in the form of a Parent Contract and monitor the impact of this
- To communicate attendance to the Governing Body, termly
- To refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite thorough intervention and support from the school.
- To report accurate whole school and individual attendance data when required.
- To celebrate regular attendance and punctuality

Role of the Education and Inclusion Service

- To work with parents who may be experiencing difficulty to ensure that their children attend school regularly
- To work closely with schools to promote children's welfare and their education
- To support schools and parents to improve attendance at school, reduce truancy and tackle persistent absence

Role of the Governing Body

- To ensure the school attendance policy is fit for purpose and matches attendance procedures.
- To ensure the school meets the national average percentage for attendance.

This policy has been written in accordance with:

The DfE School Attendance Guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities, Improving School Attendance: support for schools and local authorities, Article 28 of the UNCRC and Keeping Children Safe in Education. All these documents are available to read online or by contacting a member of the Attendance Team.

Oakfield Primary School

Attendance Guidance for Parents and Carers



Going to school regularly is important for your child's future. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure your child receives a full-time education. You are legally responsible for making sure that your children attend school.

What does good attendance mean?

Every day of school helps your child enjoy and achieve. Good attendance provides better life chances.

We know it's not always easy. We really do appreciate that you tackle juggling work commitments, traffic and weather conditions to get your children here. We also appreciate not every family's circumstances are the same.

We try our very best to understand each situation, rather than just reading a statistic.

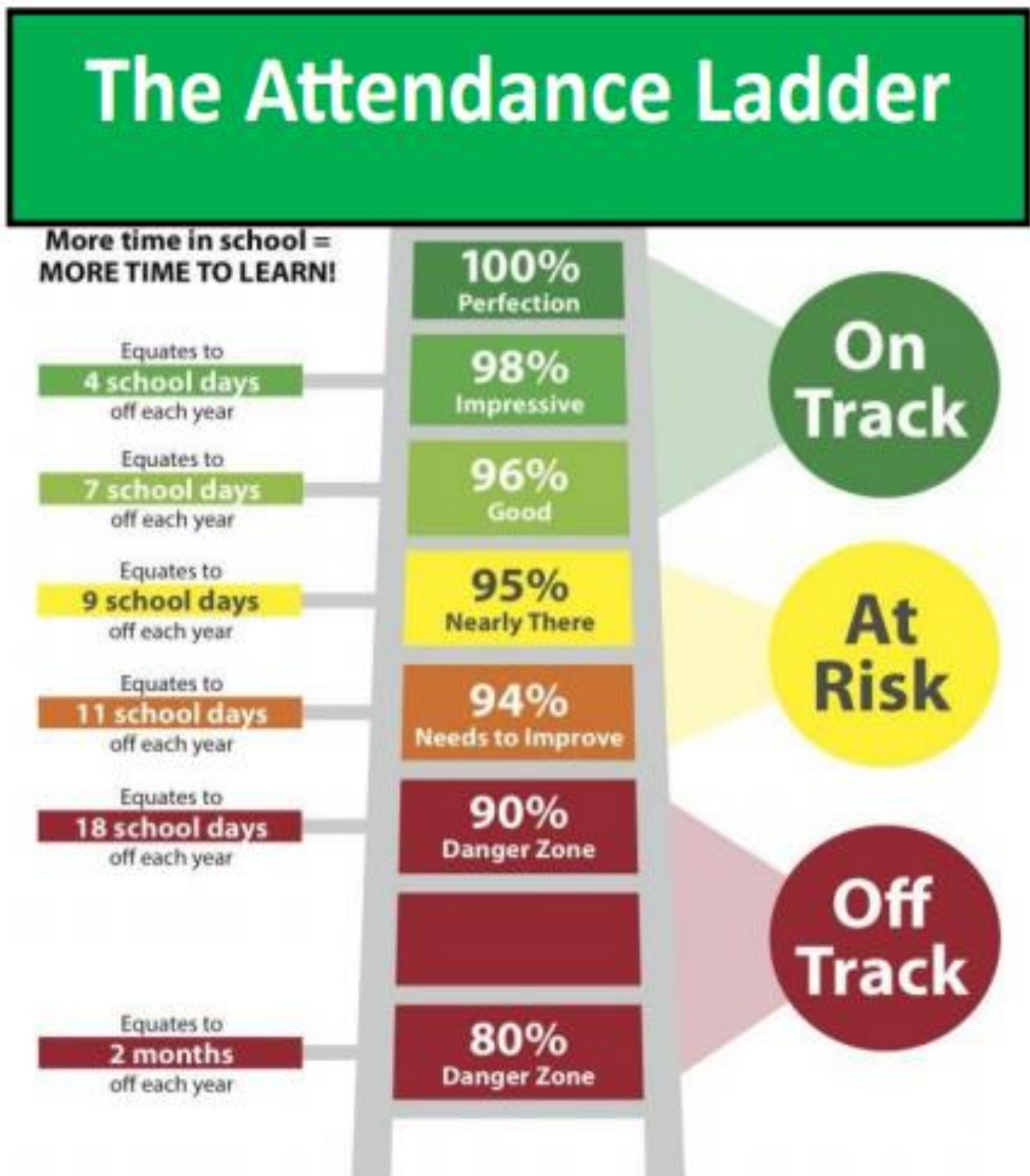
But the reality is that missed days = missed opportunities and we want to give each of our pupils every opportunity to shine.

At Oakfield Primary School our aim is to achieve at least 97% attendance and we need everyone on board!

Use the Attendance Ladder on the next page to help you keep track of your child's absences. By working together— parents, carers, pupils and school — to build a strong culture of attendance we'll give every pupil the very best chance of success.

"Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world" Nelson Mandela.

- Registration is at 8.45am which is when children should be in their classroom. The playground opens at 8.30 am, classrooms open at 8.45am. Ensure your child is at school no later than 8.45am for a prompt start.



For every day your child is absent from school,
over 6 hours of instructional time is lost.



- Registration is at 8.45am. Children should be in their classroom **no later than 8.45am**. The playground opens at 8.30am, classrooms open at 8.45am. Ensure your child is at school no later than 8.45am for a prompt start.
- If your child is unable to come to school due to illness the **school must be notified by 9.00 am on the first day and every day thereafter**. You must phone the **school office** on 01724 842246. A specific reason for absence must be provided, rather than leaving a 'not well' message. Without specific information the absence will remain unauthorised.
- **Please refer all absences directly by telephone or in person to Mrs Terentiak, The Attendance Officer in the school office – and not via dojo, email or your child's class teacher.** Mrs Terentiak will ensure the right people are notified.
- If a pupil's illness lasts for more than 2 days the school may require medical evidence to support the absence.
- Proof must be shown for any absences due to medical or dentist appointments. **No absence will be authorised without it.**
- **Holidays will not be authorised during term-time**, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- **Penalty** notices will be sought for **all unauthorised holidays and patterns of poor attendance** over a period of time.
- Please ensure your child is collected from school **promptly at 3.15 pm**. This can be very upsetting and traumatic for your child if

someone is not there to collect them. **Persistent late collection will result in a referral to the Education Inclusion Team and/ or Children's Services.**

Illness



It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school when they're unwell. There will be times when it is obvious that your child is simply too unwell to come to school, such as being physically weak, in pain or clearly in a condition that could spread unwelcome germs around the class. **Please be assured that your child's health and well-being is of the utmost importance to us, therefore, if we feel a child should not be in school because they're too unwell we will send them home.**

Please refer to the **government guidelines** for schools, a useful guide for when children should be kept off school and when they shouldn't. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-protection-in-schools-and-other-childcare-facilities/chapter-9-managing-specific-infectious-diseases>

Children with **diarrhoea and vomiting** should stay away from school for 48 hours after their symptoms have gone.

School must receive a phone call **every day** of illness absence unless agreed otherwise with the Attendance Officer.

Medical



Whenever possible, medical appointments should be made outside school hours. If it is absolutely necessary for your child to attend a medical appointment during the school day, a prescription or an appointment card, letter or text must be produced for the session to be authorised and brought to the school **before the day of the appointment.**

An absence due to a medical appointment will not be authorised until proof is seen. All absences must be reported directly to the Attendance Officer, Mrs Terentiak on 01724 842246

It should not be necessary for your child to be absent for the whole day if you either have an 'am' or 'pm' appointment. If the appointment is in the morning we expect your child to be back to school for the afternoon session; if the appointment is towards the end of the day, your child would be allowed to leave school early. Please ensure your child is signed in and out using the electronic signing in system in the school foyer.

Please ensure when you inform the Attendance Officer of the absence that you confirm the time your child will return to school and

if you think they will miss lunch to tell us whether or not they have a school dinner or packed lunch.

Avoid taking holidays in term time



Children are in school for 190 days per year. Children have 175 days where they are not required to attend school.

If you take your child on a 2 week holiday in term time, attendance for the year immediately drops to 95%.

In accordance with North Lincolnshire Council policy, holidays during term time will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances, such as an important immediate family event. Unfortunately, cost of flights being too expensive or other family members e.g. grandparents booking a surprise holiday are not exceptional circumstances.

The Attendance Officer must receive a 'request for school leave form' for any holiday request with an explanation of why you think it's an exceptional circumstance. This must be received at least 2 weeks but preferably 4 weeks prior to the requested time being taken.

Whether or not you think your circumstance is exceptional please still fill in the form as it is important for us to make you aware of your liability and the potential consequences if you go ahead with your holiday without authorisation from the head teacher.

You can pick up a Leave of Absence Form from the school office.

Penalty notices will be sought for all unauthorised holidays over a period of time or for 5 or more consecutive days.



Parents and carers will be liable to receive a penalty notice from the Local Authority for the following reasons:

- Firstly, where a pupil is taken out of school for 5 days or more without being authorised by the head teacher. Each parent and carer will be liable for each child. A penalty of £60 per parent/carers, per child will apply if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. *If the penalty notice is not paid within 28 days, the Local Authority will consider a prosecution in the Magistrates Court. Please note that Penalty Notices are issued per parent/ carer per child, so a family with 2 parents/ carers and 2 children will receive 4 penalty notices.*
- Secondly, where a pupil has a poor attendance record over a period of time.

Lateness



Lateness is classed as arriving after the beginning of the school day (8.50am) Attendance registers close 20 minutes after the beginning of the school day and any child entering school after this time will be marked down as having an unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory explanation is provided by the parent / carer. Getting up late is not a satisfactory reason. Being punctual is a life skill. Lateness disrupts learning and it is difficult for your child to catch up on what he or she has missed.



Attendance support



Our Attendance Team (made up of the Attendance Officer, Pastoral Lead and Head teacher) monitor attendance, lateness and late collection closely.

If poor attendance patterns are noticed you will receive a **phone call** from a member of the Attendance Team to discuss your child's

absence, remind you of your statutory obligations regarding attendance and to offer support if needed. If attendance does not improve after this phone call, you will be **invited in** to discuss your child's attendance where an attendance contract will be created and targets set for improved attendance. The attendance contract can also be done over the phone if necessary. If, after the attendance contract has been reviewed over a period of time, a significant improvement in attendance is not seen **a referral** may be made to the Education Inclusion and Partnership Team which may result in an interview under caution, a court appearance and a fine.

Our Pastoral Team are also able to offer support if you are struggling with your child's attendance. Please make an appointment to see Mrs Chafer on 01724 842246 if you and your family need support.

Benefits of great attendance



Your child will understand their lessons better.

They will achieve better results.

They will sustain stronger friendships.

They will be more confident and have good self-esteem.

They will be proud of their great attendance record.

Weekly class attendance is recorded - the class with the highest percentage is rewarded with a trophy - a team effort.