

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

Approved by the Local Governing Body:	4th March 2021
To be reviewed by the Local Governing Body:	Autumn Term 2023

Responsible Person(s): Assistant Headteacher

At Orchard Park High School we firmly believe that all students benefit from outstanding school attendance. To this end, we will do all we can to ensure that our students achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent full attendance are identified and acted upon promptly. In order for an attendance record to be deemed good, it must be 96% or above:

100% - Outstanding Attendance

98% - Very Good Attendance

96% - Expected

95% or below - Cause for concern

Aims and Objectives

We intend to establish systems and practices which will:

- create an ethos in which excellent attendance is the norm
- maintain a safe, secure environment for students and a curriculum that meets their needs, thereby positively encouraging attendance
- raise student awareness of the importance of punctuality and uninterrupted attendance, and encourage in students a sense of responsibility

Expectations

We expect that all students will:

- attend school regularly
- attend school punctually
- attend school appropriately prepared for the day

We expect that parent(s)/carer(s) who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

- encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities
- ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually, prepared for the school day
- Any unexplained absence will be treated as unauthorised absence. The school should be report the child's absence by contacting the school before 8.30am on the morning of each day of the student's absence by calling the 24-hour attendance line [020 8776 0220 - option 1] or by emailing: studentabsence@orchardparkhigh.net or by sending a message via the SchoolGateway app.
 - Provide medical evidence for any absence lasting for 4 days or more
- Provide medical evidence when requested and/or when a child attendance is 90% and below contacted promptly whenever any problems occur that may keep the child away from school

Orchard Park High School has a responsibility to ensure form tutors/class teachers:

- complete registers accurately and punctually during form time and every lesson
- assist the Attendance Manager in investigating any unexplained non-attendance when the student returns
- inform the Attendance Manager/Academic Year Lead of concerns
- be alert to early signs of disaffection which could culminate in non-attendance and to report these concerns as soon as possible to the Academic Year Lead
- follow the schools Attendance Intervention Chart

The legal framework

Regular school attendance of children of compulsory school age is the responsibility of the parent(s) / carer(s) and is a legal requirement in accordance with section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Parent(s)/carer(s) are committing an offence if they fail to comply with this legislation and legal action can be instigated.

Responding to Non-Attendance

When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond in the following manner:

- If a child's absence has not been reported to the school, the Attendance Manager will activate the 'School Absence System'. The system will call/text/email the parent(s)/carer(s) contact numbers until a response is received. Failing to report your child absent from school is a potential safeguarding concern.
- in the event of no response being received for the absence, an absence letter will be sent home. If no response is received within five days of the date of the letter, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.
- all periods of absence from school of 4 days or more will require medical evidence to be provided.
- absence is monitored regularly in conjunction with the Attendance Manager. Any student with an attendance deemed lower than good will continue to be monitored and absence letters will be sent home. Persistent unexplained absences will result in the school issuing penalty notices
- if, at the next attendance check, there is no improvement, a further letter will be sent home and the parent(s)/carer(s) invited to attend a meeting at school to discuss their concerns. At this stage the school may ask for medical evidence to be provided before authorising any further absences. The school will tell parents that, if the absence persists, a referral will be made to the Educational Welfare Officer. Once a formal referral is made by school to the EWO, no further absence will be authorised without medical evidence being provided.
- failure to comply with the expectations set by the Trust may result in further action by either a referral to appear before the schools attendance panel, issue of a Penalty Notice, an application for an Education Supervision Order or court prosecution.

Lateness

AM Registration/Roll call from 8.15am – 8.35am (depending on Year group arrangements during Covid-19). Registers are closed at 9.30am

- If a student arrives late to Roll-Call after 8.15am without an authorised reason, (such as a medical appointment) he/she will receive a late mark and a 1 hour study support from their tutor, to be sat after school on the same day. They will sign in on our late system recording software with the Welfare Officer.
- 1 hour study support cannot be deferred unless in exceptional circumstances and pre-agreed by the school. A student will receive a 1 hour study support for every time they are late
- Legal registers will close at 9.30am. All arrivals after this time will be considered as an unauthorised absence from the AM session and is marked as a U Code, unless medical evidence is provided. Where appropriate, reasons for lateness are investigated and responded to in the appropriate manner
- All appointments must be communicated with the school in advance by contacting the Attendance Manager via the usual attendance communication systems. Medical evidence may be requested to support your child's late arrival to school.
- Parent meetings will be held by Academic Year Leaders for students who are persistently late

Absences that the school is unable to authorise include (not exhaustive):

- unauthorised holiday
- arrival after the register has closed, i.e. 9.30am onwards without prior notification
- shopping trips, even if this is for school uniform
- looking after a relative or pets
- Collecting or dropping off a sibling to school
- tiredness due to extra-curricular activities
- unexplained absence of more than 4 days

Appointments

We ask that parents/carers make any medical appointments for their child after school hours so that students do not miss any time off from school.

Where this is not possible, any essential appointments must be communicated with the school in advance by contacting the Attendance Manager via the usual attendance communication systems. students will be expected where possible to attend school, before and after an appointment. Medical evidence may be requested to support your child's late arrival or absence from school.

Holidays

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and it is essential that parent(s)/carer(s) take their family holidays during the school holidays. It is the school's policy not to authorise absence during term time for holidays, trips or visits and any absence of this nature will be recorded as unauthorised.

Parent(s)/carer(s) may write to the Headteacher requesting leave of absence during term time but such requests are unlikely to be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. Requests for long periods of absence will not be authorised and a meeting with the Headteacher or a senior teacher and a School Attendance Manager will be required.

If parent(s)/carer(s) take their children on holiday, trip or visit during term time without authorisation the school will apply for a Penalty Notice to be issued in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act 1966 and the Education and Inspection Act 2006. The fine from September 2013 will be £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the Penalty Notice, increasing to £120 if paid after this date, but within 28 days.

Please note that a Penalty Notice is issued to each parent in respect of each child not attending school. "Parents" includes partners who are not married to, but who live with, one of the parents who has main care responsibilities for the child(ren).

Safeguarding

The school will track and attempt to make contact with parent(s)/carer(s) of students who are absent but remain on roll. Students who are absent for twenty days or more will be considered to be a Child Missing in Education (CME) and the school will begin the process of removing the student from the school's roll.

For students who are on a Child Protection plan (CP), if a safeguarding issue occurs the previous evening to their absence, a home visit will be made by the school the same day of the absence.

Penalty Notice

A Penalty Notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in Court, but which seeks to improve a pupil's attendance. Penalty Notice may be issued to parents/carers who are failing to secure their child's regular school attendance and are failing to engage with the Attendance Manager.

- Where a child is taken out of school for a holiday during term without the authority of the Headteacher, each parent is liable to receive a penalty notice for each child.
- Where attendance has fallen below 85% or there are no less than 10 unauthorised sessions during a sixth month period.

With the exception of unauthorised holidays taken in term time, parents will be sent a formal warning of their liability to receive such a notice before it is issued.