

Oak Meadow Primary School

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ, 01902 558517, oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk



Attendance Policy

From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow.

Approval Date:	March 2021
Review Date:	March 2024

From tiny acorns ¹mighty oaks grow...



Policy Amendments:

All letters detailed within the appendices have been redrafted and included within the policy.

The previous policy detailed actions for following when a pupil's attendance fell below 90%. As a school with an attendance target of 97%, actions are implemented as soon as attendance falls below 96%.

Aim: Our aim is to provide a framework which promotes and encourages regular and punctual attendance, in order that pupils may receive full entitlement provided at Oak Meadow Primary School.

Objectives:

- To raise the overall school attendance to be at least in line with national and to improve attendance to above the national average.
- To reduce the number of persistent absentees.
- To promote a culture of punctuality and good attendance.
- To improve parental understanding of the school's expectations and for attendance and punctuality.
- To work with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer), to improve pupil attendance and punctuality.
- To closely monitor attendance and punctuality.

These will be achieved by:

- Sharing this policy and procedures with parents/ carers and the school's attendance target with pupils.
- Regular meetings with EWO (Education Welfare Officer), Attendance Officer, Home School Liaison Officer and Headteacher.
- Monitoring and reporting attendance and absenteeism through termly governor board meetings.
- Creating reward systems for good attendance and punctuality.
- Relevant staff receiving training as required.
- Seeking the views of all year groups through the School Council.

Procedures for Attendance

- All doors open for pupils at 8.45a.m.
- Doors close for pupils at 8.55a.m. whereupon the bell will ring marking the official start of the day.
- The daily register is taken by the class teacher at 8.55a.m. with pupils sitting down and following class procedures.
- Teachers close registers at 9.00a.m.
- Pupils are marked present or absent. Absences are marked with 'N' for the attendance officer to complete.
- Children attending appointments during the school day will be signed out at the entrance foyer using our electronic system and signed back in on return.

Procedures for Punctuality

- Late pupils must enter via the entrance foyer.
- Pupils who arrive after 8.55a.m. must have an adult sign them in using our electronic system which will record how many minutes late and the reason for the lateness.
- After 9.05a.m. the Attendance Officer begins to update SIMs.

Monitoring of lateness will be undertaken by the Attendance Officer, Home School Liaison Officer and Headteacher and recurring problems will lead to parents and carers being invited into school to address the concern. (Appendix A and B)

Procedures for Pupil Absence

- It is a parent's responsibility to inform school of absence and subsequently, reasons for the absence.
- Parents and carers are required to contact school before 9.30am on each day of absence to confirm the reason of absence and its likely duration.

NOTE: Parents and carers who routinely fail to make contact with the school will have all absences unauthorised and may be contacted by Wolverhampton Local Authority Education Welfare Officer.

- If a child is not in school and no reason for absence has been received, parents/ carers are contacted by 10.30a.m. via text message asking to contact school to provide a reason.
- If we do not receive a response to the text message and attendance is below 96%, a home visit may be carried out by our school's Home School Liaison Officer and attendance Officer.

Pupils who cause concern

- For parents and carers of children who have attendance below 96%, attendance is identified as causing concern. Attendance will be monitored along with actions taken and targets for attendance will be set.

Where pupil's attendance is:

Below 96% and is falling, parents/ carers will receive a letter stating current attendance and next required steps (Appendix C). This letter is given to the pupil to take home.

Monitoring of attendance is shared with parents and carers using termly attendance tables. The letter will also inform parents and carers that their child's attendance will be discussed with our Wolverhampton Local Authority Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

Below 96% and is falling

- School action is discussed in the fortnightly meeting involving the Attendance Officer, Home School Liaison Officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- The School may also inform the School Nurse if absences are authorised due to medical reasons.
- If there is no further improvement in attendance, Early Help Assessment is offered. This takes the form of a letter (Appendix D) to arrange a meeting between school, EWO and parents/ carers.
- If the Early Help Assessment is refused or has no response, a DNA letter (did not attend) is sent to parents/ carers (Appendix E) and if unauthorised absences continue; legal proceedings may take place.

Regular meetings take place between school and EWO to monitor attendance and discuss cases. The Headteacher will regularly update Governors with an overview of attendance and formally report to Governors termly.

Procedures for Monitoring and Promoting Attendance

- Attendance percentage for the week is displayed outside each classroom and changed weekly on a Friday.
- The class with the highest weekly attendance is rewarded with a trophy, presented during achievement assembly.

- The class with the highest half-termly attendance is rewarded with an attendance shield (KS2) or attendance bear (Foundation and KS1).
- Pupils with 100% attendance for a term are rewarded with a certificate.
- The EWO promotes the importance of good attendance by participating in the induction meeting for new parents/ carers, distributing literature produced by the LA/ DfE and by attending our celebration assembly at the end of the school year.
- Parents and carers are kept informed about attendance through the school website, school communications, noticeboards, parent/ carer evenings and pupils' annual reports.

Leave of Absence

The school follows the local authority procedures when parents and carers apply for leave of absence. All applications are assessed on a case by case basis.

Application for Leave of Absence

- The Parent/ carer collects leave of absence form from school reception.
- The Parent/ carer returns completed application form which is date stamped.
- The Attendance Officer attaches attendance information and forwards application to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher applies approval criteria.
- The Application is forwarded to the Attendance Officer who informs parent/ carer of outcome by appropriate letter (Appendices F and G).
- Applications are processed within five working days.
- Leave of absence requests for children under 5 years of age will be approved as children are of non-statutory age. (Appendix H)

Leave of absence that is approved = authorised absence.

Leave of absence that is not approved = unauthorised absence.

The Headteacher and Governing Board approve leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances such as bereavement, serious illness and significant events such as a family wedding or cultural/ religious reasons. **As decided by the Governors of the school, the Headteacher, apart from highly exceptional cases, can only authorise up to 4 days' leave of absence in an academic year. Any further leave of absence in that academic year will not be authorised.**

If any further leave of absence exceeds 4 days in succession, the school will contact the local authority who may serve a penalty notice.

Exceptional Circumstances

The view of the DfE is a child should be in school for the 39 weeks of the academic year and that holidays in term time, in whatever form, are not considered to be 'exceptional' circumstances.

Holidays are not a good enough reason for taking a child or young person out of school.

Absence from school under exceptional circumstances is slightly different from taking a holiday in term time. In deciding whether or not to grant a leave of absence for 'exceptional circumstances', the following is considered:

- What is the normal pattern of attendance for the child(ren) whose parent/ carer is asking for a leave of absence.
- What is 'exceptional' for one family might be the norm for another family.

If the request for a leave of absence is not approved by the Headteacher but the parent/ carer takes their child away, the absence will be marked as unauthorised and the Headteacher may refer the matter to the local authority. The parent/ carer is then at risk of receiving a £60 penalty notice per child per parent.

Non-Return from Leave of Absence

It may occur that a child does not return within the stated period of leave of absence. Initially, normal school absence procedures are followed.

If the child has not returned within five days subsequent to the stated period of leave of absence, the following procedure is followed:

- Case referred to the EWO.
- Home visit carried out by the Home School Liaison Officer and/ or the Headteacher or Attendance Officer.
- Letter (Appendix G) is posted to parents/ carers.

Monitoring the Policy for Attendance and Punctuality

- The views of parents/ carers and pupils are sought annually through questionnaires.
- The LA provides support when reviewing the policy.
- The policy is regularly updated and formally reviewed every three years or as guidelines change or are reviewed.

Appendix A

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Parents/Carer's Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

Dear _____

As a school, we monitor both attendance and punctuality and it is through these processes that we are becoming concerned about _____ punctuality – arriving late ____ times since _____.

Punctuality is a key aspect of school life and research studies have shown that a lack of punctuality during a child's school life can have adverse effects during their work life. Arriving late for school also has a detrimental effect on their learning as they miss the introductory teaching of the first lesson. This can be disruptive both to your child and others in the class.

Section 444 (1) of the Education Act states that:

"If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend at the school, his / her parent is guilty of an offence".

By law, failure to be at school on time can be recorded as an absence and therefore, you may be liable for legal proceedings if attendance falls below an acceptable standard.

Please ensure your child arrives at school between 8:45 and 8:55 am. Children arriving before 8:45 are not covered by insurance unless they are attending Breakfast Club.

If you have any particular difficulties or wish to discuss the matter, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. S. Arnold
Headteacher





Appendix B

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Parent Name/Address

Children's Name:

Current attendance:

Dear Parent/ Carer,

An appointment has been made for you to see our Education Welfare Officer, on

_____.

We would like to offer this supportive meeting to discuss _____punctuality.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that punctuality is a key aspect of school life and research studies have shown that a lack of punctuality during a child's school life can have adverse effects during their work life. Arriving late for school also has a detrimental effect on their learning as they miss the introductory teaching of the first lesson. This can be disruptive both to your child and others in the class.

Section 444 (1) of the Education Act states that:

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Please ensure your child arrives at school between 8:45 and 8:55 am. Children arriving before 8:45 are not covered by insurance unless they are attending Breakfast Club.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. S. Arnold

Headteacher



Appendix C

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Dear Parent/Carer,

School Attendance

Child's Name: _____

Class: _____

Your child's attendance is currently below 96%.

Attendance as of _____ is _____%.

We appreciate that you may have contacted school to report absences in line with our absence monitoring procedures and we thank you for this. We may also have spoken to you. However, as your child's attendance is below our school's acceptable percentage, we now write to ask for your support and consideration to ensure your child accesses all teaching and learning as far as possible, and to refrain from any further absences.

Required Next Steps

- Contact school on **every day** of absence
- Provide medical evidence of illness. This could be:
 - ❖ A GP appointment card (name/date/time clearly stated)
 - ❖ Prescription
 - ❖ Medical Packaging
 - ❖ Medication
 - ❖ Hospital Letter/Appointment Letter

The information will be needed in order to authorise any absences in the future. If we can provide any further support or advice, please contact us on 01902 558517.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Arnold Headteacher





Appendix D

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Parent Name/Address

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Attendance: _____%

Dear Parent/ Carer,

An appointment has been made for you to see _____, our Education Welfare Officer, on _____ at _____ at school.

We would like to offer support through an Early Help Assessment. If you decide to decline the support available and absences continue to be recorded as unauthorised it may lead to legal proceedings.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that in order for absences to be recorded as authorised, you must contact school on every day of absence and medical evidence will be required.

The following evidence will be accepted by school;

- A GP appointment card (date, time and child's name clearly stated)
- Prescription
- Medication
- Medication packaging
- Hospital letters/Appointment letters

If you are unable to attend the meeting at the above time and date, please contact the school as soon as possible and an alternative appointment will be made.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Arnold Headteacher





Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Appendix E

Parent Name/Address:

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Dear _____

A supportive Early Help Assessment meeting was arranged for you to see _____, our Education Welfare Officer, on _____ at _____ at school.

Unfortunately, you did not attend or contact school to rearrange the meeting. If you would like to arrange another meeting, please contact school via telephone: 01902 558517.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that in order for _____ absences to be recorded as authorised, medical evidence will be required. The following evidence will be accepted by school:

- A GP appointment card (date, time and child's name clearly stated)
- Prescription
- Medication
- Medication packaging
- Hospital letters/Appointment letters

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Arnold Headteacher





Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Appendix F

Parent/ Carer's Name

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Re: Leave of Absence in term time request for

Following your request for leave of absence in term time for _____, I regret that I am unable to authorise this absence. My reasons are as follows:

. Under the amendments to the 2006 Pupil Registration Regulations, Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

. The Leave of Absence cannot be considered under the Exceptional Circumstances clause, as advised by the DfE (Department for Education).

Should you take the requested leave of absence, the school's attendance policy makes it clear that this absence will not be authorised and I have a duty to inform the Education Welfare Services who may issue a Penalty Notice.

Governors at Oak Meadow have taken the decision to apply fines from the 5th day of absence in any school year – September to July.

Dates of unauthorised absence:

If for any reason your child/children do not return to school on the expected date, you must make all possible efforts to contact us. If we do not feel that the reason for the delay is acceptable, the absence will not be authorised. You could risk losing your child/children's place at school; I have a duty to inform the Education Welfare Service who may serve a penalty notice. The penalty notice is for £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this but within 28 days.

Parents/Carers have a duty to ensure their child/children's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely,

Mr S Arnold
(Headteacher)

From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow...



Appendix G

Ryan Avenue, Ashmore Park, Wolverhampton, WV11 2QQ

Email: oakmeadowprimaryschool@wolverhampton.gov.uk

Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Date: _____

Parent Name/Address

Child's Name: _____ Class: _____

Re: Leave of Absence in term time request for _____.

I have carefully considered your request for leave of absence for the children in term time.

I have decided to authorise the leave because the circumstances are exceptional.

_____ is authorised to have _____ day's leave of absence from
_____ to _____.

If for any reason your child does not return to school on the expected date, you must make all possible efforts to contact us. If we do not feel that the reason for the delay is acceptable, the absence will not be authorised. You could risk losing your child/children's place at school; I have a duty to inform the Education Welfare Service who may serve a penalty notice. The penalty notice is for £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this but within 28 days.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child/children's regular attendance at school and failure to do so is an offence under Section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

Yours sincerely, Mr. S. Arnold Headteacher

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Phone: (01902) 558517 **Fax:** (01902) 558520

Website: www.oakmeadowschool.uk

Appendix H

Date: _____

Parent Name/Address

Leave of Absence – Under 5 years old

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____

Dear _____

I have carefully considered your request for leave of absence in term time. I can authorise leave as your child is under 5.

Once a child reaches 5 years, any leave over 5 days will be unauthorised and fines will be levied.

The fine will be £60 per parent per child.

Many thanks,

Yours sincerely,

Mr. S. Arnold
Headteacher

From tiny acorns mighty oaks grow...

