



OMBERSLEY ENDOWED FIRST SCHOOL

Attendance and Registration Policy

Rationale

Ombersley Endowed First School aims to create a happy, welcoming and successful school where everyone is able to share in shaping future generations. We support and encourage the rights of parents to partner us in the education of their child. We value each child, their family and the wider community, of which the school is part.

We do understand that there are sometimes genuine reasons for absence, such as sickness and are sympathetic in these circumstances. However, we believe that children are only able to access the curriculum and develop to their full potential as learners and as part of the school community if they are regular and punctual attendees at school. Research shows that children who do attend school regularly are more likely to success than those who have a high level of absence.

Attendance at school until the end of the year in which they are 16 is a legal requirement, something this school wholeheartedly supports. It is the duty of the school, along with the Local Authority (LA) to monitor and report to Government on attendance. The school in conjunction with the LA's Education Investigation Service sets itself an attendance target which are challenging but attainable based on previous data and informed by national statistics.

Attendance is a high priority for Ombersley Endowed First School and we continually seek to make improvements. As a result we regularly review new initiatives to support this area and are happy to take on board any that we feel may make a positive difference to attendance.

As a school we are determined to work together with parents, children and outside agencies, such as the Education Investigation Service (EIS), Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and the LA to improve attendance at school and to reduce the number of absences and late arrivals. This policy sets out to explain the measures undertaken to achieve our aims.

Procedures

It is the responsibility of all of us to support good attendance. Class teachers are required by law to mark registers twice daily at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions. Any absences will then be recorded. Registers are legal documents and have to be completed with the correct coding found in the front of registers.

Governors monitor attendance and punctuality and have a named Governor who takes responsibility for this as part of their safeguarding brief.

Parents are legally required to bring their child to school every teaching day. If their child is ill or there are other circumstances that prevent the child from attending then it is the responsibility of the parents to inform school of these reasons. We ask that they contact us by telephone before 10am on the first day of absence. The school will contact parents (on the 1st day of absence) in order to establish reasons if no call is received. We strongly urge that non-emergency medical and dental appointments are made outside school hours.

Reasons for absence are marked in the register by teachers using the attendance codes listed in the appendix. If, when the child is back at school and we have no notification of reasons for absence a letter will be sent out requesting that we are given an explanation. Parents are given time to reply but if there has been no response by the following Friday then the child's absence is marked as unauthorised.

The school's attendance target is 96%. Attendance is monitored weekly, working alongside the Education Welfare Officer (EWO). If a child's absence level falls **below 90%** this is considered to be a concern and is monitored by ourselves and the EWO. If attendance continues to fall below 90% then the school refers the child to the E.W.O. and the case becomes 'open'. The E.W.O. then works with the parents until an acceptable level of attendance is achieved. The case can then be closed. However the child continues to be monitored and should there be further attendance problems the case will be reopened.

In some instances school may identify cases of patterns of absence. These may be regular absences that may have explanations eg regular absences on Fridays/Mondays or where it is evident that, although reasons for absence have been provided, it is clear that the child is not ill. These too may be referred to the EWO.

In cases where pupils are attending more than one setting the school will ensure that it will liaise with the relevant agencies and establishments. Once the school has identified any children who may be at risk of long-term absence, such as a prolonged stay in hospital, it will work closely with agencies to ensure that the child is able to continue their education as and when appropriate.

The school recognises that reintegration for those children that have had a long-term absence or for those who have had shared provision may be problematical. We also recognise that there are other groups of children who may need support in coming into the school environment. These may include looked after children, asylum seekers and refugees. In accordance with our equal opportunities policy all of these cases will be supported by the school. Needs will be addressed through an agreed individual pastoral and education plan.

If issues to do with absence are centred around allegations of bullying or racial abuse the school will draw on its equal opportunities and anti-bullying policies to work through these issues with both the parents and children concerned.

As in other areas of school we promote a positive attitude to behaviour and try to recognise and reward excellent attendance. We do this by using a range of rewards such as:

- Giving stickers to individuals
- Giving certificates to those who have achieved 100% attendance at the end of every term.
- Awarding OTIS (On Time in School) bear to the class with the highest % of attendance each week.
- Punctuality postcards

Holidays

Legal regulations make it clear that parents/ carers do not have any right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purpose of a term-time holiday. All parents requesting a holiday in term time must see Mrs Moore to obtain a form requesting permission to take their child out of school. The Governing Body will decide if the criteria of 'exceptional circumstances' has been met for authorised absence. The Government's guidance on attendance can be found at:

www.education.gov.uk

In very exceptional circumstances requests may be authorised by the Governing Body. In these cases only 5 days maximum authorised absence will be granted. Parents/carers will be notified by letter of the decision of the Governing Body in granting or declining authorised leave.

It must be noted that the school understands that parents may still choose to take their child out of school for a vacation. These absences will be marked as unauthorised and may therefore have an adverse effect on our reported figures. This then shows the level of commitment this school has to ensuring children attend school for the maximum amount of time possible. Unauthorised absence of over 5 days will be reported to the Education Investigation Service. This may incur a fine of £60.

We hope that parents will work together with us in our commitment to reducing absence.

Punctuality

Late arrival at school can be very distressing for some children and can cause them to be unnecessarily anxious. It is our belief that children settle into their learning more effectively when they are on time for school. It sets the whole tone for the day and allows them to be part of any initial discussions that take place with their peers and their teacher.

The school day officially starts at 8.45am when the register is taken. If a child is not present at registration they will be marked as late when they do arrive. Lateness is closely monitored and action is taken to address this issue in the same way as any other absence. A child will be marked late from close of register at 8.50 am. Lateness after 9.15am will incur an unauthorised absence mark.

Missing children (See also Missing Child Policy)

Should a child leave the school without notice being given by the parent or without the school being advised by the parent as to which new school the child is to attend – ie should the child go ‘missing’ or become ‘lost’ – the school will first try to contact the parent on any mobile numbers available. If no response the school will immediately notify the Education Welfare Officer and Police. If the child is also on a child protection plan, children’s social care will also be notified.

Conclusion

This document has highlighted the importance of attendance in the education of children. The school remains committed to working towards the goal of a 100% attendance for all. We are always happy to support and encourage parents and children to attend. At Ombersley we operate an open-door policy and will address individual needs to the best of our ability. In return we hope for the support of both parents and children in achieving the best possible levels of attendance that we can.

Signed: *C. Moore*

Date: April 2020

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Date:

Date for Review: Summer 2022