



# Oakfield Short Stay Primary Attendance Policy

January 2026

## **Aim**

The aim of Oakfield Short Stay Primary attendance policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. At Oakfield Short Stay Primary School, we recognise the link between attendance, well-being, achievement and behaviour. Children who attend regularly achieve better, feel happier and gain confidence.

For children to reach their full potential and experience success they must be in school. We expect parents and carers to aim for 100% attendance for their children where appropriate. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

Oakfield Short Stay Primary takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents/carers, pupils and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Management Committee**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the management committee will:

- review the school's attendance rules and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents and children to implement the rules effectively
- ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children and staff
- take time at meetings to regularly review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen
- ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site
- ensure that senior leaders make the necessary referrals to the local authority and other relevant agencies in individual cases of non-attendance

### **School leadership team**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement
- coordinate with the management committee to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full review
- ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance process, legislation and government guidance, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues
- ensure that legislation and government guidance on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislative changes and how to implement them
- report to the management committee on attendance records, data and provision

- ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively
- develop and engage with multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend
- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
  - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
  - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

### **Teachers and support staff**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily

### **Parents and carers**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- encourage and support their children's aspirations
- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the headteacher (
- inform the school in advance of any proposed change of address for their child(ren) along with the name of the parent with whom the child shall live.

### **Pupils**

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- be aware of the school's attendance rules, and when and what they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff, parents and the school timetable
- speak to a member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance

### **Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences**

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents/carers cannot authorise absences.

Staff should make it clear on the school register when taking attendance whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised. Where staff have concerns regarding absences, they should follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents/carers should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return.

If a child is absent from school for 10 consecutive days with no explanation the family will be referred as a Child Missing in Education CME case for the Local Authority to investigate.

### **Illness**

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call to alert the school on *the first day/each day* of absence. If contact by the parent/carer has not been made a member of the leadership team will make contact each day requesting an update.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper. If these are not provided on request it may result in the absence continuing to be classed as unauthorised.

### **Medical or dental appointments**

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

### **Authorised absences**

There may be some exceptional instances where the school will authorise absence such as for a family bereavement.

### **Exclusion**

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. Senior leaders or teachers will arrange for work to be sent home.

### **Religious observance**

Oakfield Short Stay Primary recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times.

Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

## Exceptional Leave

Oakfield Short Stay School recognise that there may be times when a pupil requires exceptional leave during term time for short periods of time. In these circumstances parents must complete the 'Exceptional Leave Form' to request the absence, in advance. These requests will be considered by the Headteacher on an individual basis. If leave is granted, the Headteacher will determine the length of time the pupil can be away from school.

Exceptional leave may be granted for:

- Religious observance
- External exams
- Part-time timetable
- Visits to prospective new schools Holidays/Unauthorised absence

Oakfield Short Stay School believes that any absence from learning disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress and should be avoided, therefore, holidays in term time will not be authorised, unless deemed by the Headteacher to be exceptional.

If a pupil meets the national threshold to issue a penalty notice, the Headteacher will consider if a penalty notice fine will be issued, and refer the pupil to the Local Authority.

The national threshold is 10 sessions of absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks e.g. 5 or more consecutive days of term time leave (holiday), and for fewer days where this has happened before, in line with DfE Working together to improve attendance guidance 2024. 10 sessions of unauthorised non-consecutive absence in a 10-week rolling period (including holidays and late marks). Before issuing a penalty notice, the Headteacher will consider if further support would be more appropriate and will consider obligations Under the Equality Act 2010, such as where a child has a disability. Penalty notices will be issued in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices

Before issuing a penalty notice, the Headteacher will consider if further support would be more appropriate and will consider obligations Under the Equality Act 2010, such as where a child has a disability.

Penalty notices will be issued in line with the National Framework for Penalty Notices:

First Penalty Notice - £160 per parent (authorising the absence) per child when paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

Second Penalty Notice (within 3 years) - £160 per parent (authorising the absence) per child when paid within 28days.

Third Penalty Notice (within 3 years) - the third time an offense is committed, alternative action will be taken. This will often include considering prosecution or other attendance legal interventions.

See Appendix 1 – Leicestershire County Council overview

## Late arrival

For pupils attending full time the attendance register will be taken at the start of the school day and again in the afternoon. In the morning **this will differ for each site. The morning registration period ends at 9.40am.** Pupils who arrive after this time but within the registration period will be marked as late.

The school also takes the attendance register during the afternoon of each school day. If a pupil is not present at the time that the afternoon registration takes place, they will be marked absent. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Persistent lateness may result in disciplinary action being taken against the pupil and/or criminal action being taken against the parents.

# Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences: What you need to know about the changes.

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for unauthorised absences that occur after 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

## 5 Consecutive Days of Term Time Leave.

Penalty Notice fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days, and for fewer days where this has happened before.

## 10 Sessions of Unauthorised Absence in a 10-week period.

Penalty Notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of absence in a 10-week period.

## Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice fines will be issued to each parent, for each child who was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave will result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

### First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

### Second Offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child when paid within 28 days.

(No option to pay at £80 level)

### Third offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for Term Time Leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued. The case will proceed to the Magistrates' court.

Magistrate's fines can be up to £2,500 per parent, per child.



Please consult your school's attendance policy and speak with your school if you are thinking of taking your child out of school during term-time. It is likely you will need to make a written request to take your child out of school and any leave of absence will need to be agreed by your Headteacher before it is taken.