



Attendance Policy 2024 – 2025

A Summary for Families

The Ormskirk School Attendance Target for all students is 97%

[A full version of our Attendance policy can be downloaded from the school website.](#)

Our approach to attendance – All children are entitled to receive a full-time education that allows them to reach their potential and live a fulfilling life. Being in school, and ready to learn, is crucial to a young persons' attainment, wellbeing, and wider life chances. The aim of this policy is to maximise pupil attendance, thereby leading to the best possible outcomes, academically and socially.

We believe that the highest rates of attendance are achieved when students feel they 'belong' to our community, and when they feel safe and happy in school. Our policy recognises that absence often results from a mix of complex factors, however, we believe that many of these barriers can be reduced through a genuine partnership between school, the absentee, and their parents.

Legal Duties and Responsibilities – The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

The Importance of Attendance – Great attendance is the first step towards success both within and beyond the classroom. National research and our data show a clear link between attendance, attainment and wellbeing. Students with regular absences are more likely to underperform in their studies, to self-report friendship issues and poor mental health, and are less likely to participate in clubs, performances and sporting activities, or attend trips and residential.

Absences – Schools are required to record attendance twice daily, at 8:50am and 1:20pm. If your child misses one or both of these registers, parents are required by law to notify school of the reason for the absence, this can be done by phone call or email. If no reason is provided, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The session is also recorded as unauthorised if a student arrives at school after 9:20am with no valid reason to explain their lateness.

Where possible, medical appointments should be made outside of the school day. If a medical appointment cannot be scheduled out of school hours, parents should only take their child out of school



for the minimum amount of time. Pupils with a high level of absence, may be required to provide medical evidence (appointment cards, prescriptions etc) to confirm the cause of absence. Where evidence is requested but not provided, the absence will be unauthorised. School will only ask for medical evidence when there is genuine and reasonable doubt regarding the authenticity of illness being the cause of absence.

Leaves of Absence – Leaves of absence are only authorised in exceptional circumstances. In accordance with government and LA guidelines, the school **does not** authorise holidays or family visits. Sporting and educational visits are only considered if parents submit supporting documentation stating the lead adult, the location of the event, and the dates of activities the student is involved in. In some cases, a risk assessment from either the host venue or party lead may be requested. Parents who wish to apply for a leave of absence should complete our online form **3 months** in advance of any proposed absence.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may result in a Penalty Notice. Penalty notices are issued when a pupil misses 10 school sessions within a rolling 10-school week period (i.e., 5 days). This may include absences as a result of arriving late after the register closes. The 10 school weeks may span different terms or school years.

Attendance Tracking – The attendance of all our students is closely monitored. Pastoral staff track a number of different attendance measures, including the student’s overall attendance, patterns of missed sessions, and the frequency of broken weeks (school weeks where at least one session is missed). In accordance with government legislation, the attendance data of all pupils is shared with both the DFE and local authority.

Attendance Interventions – When necessary, action is taken to support a student after a period of absence and/or to increase future attendance. Before any intervention is actioned, the student’s individual circumstances will be considered. In some cases, a student’s medical or special educational needs may require a refinement of school procedures and the implementation of a bespoke support plan.

Falling attendance will result in **Attendance Interview** with a member of SLT. Parents will be notified of these meetings in advance. These discussions are not a sanction and are intended to be supportive.

When a student’s attendance pattern causes significant concern, parents/carers will receive regular **communications** from school alerting them to their child’s absence rate. Communication will occur through formal letters and Parentmail updates. If a student’s attendance declines further, the individual will be linked to an **Attendance Partner**; a staff member who will work closely with the student and their family to raise attendance. The linked staff member will ensure appropriate support is in place to address any ongoing barriers to attendance, this could include arranging mentoring sessions with a member of our pastoral team, or providing access to The Hub.



The school holds **termly attendance panels**. These are led by either a member of the school's governing body or a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team. These panels give parents the opportunity to help school to understand the specific issues which are leading to their child's absence. At these panel meetings, school will explain the wide range of support measures (both pastoral and academic) available in school and out of school for struggling students.

Formal and Legal Action – When a student fails to regularly attend school, the parents may be guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted by the local authority. As a school, we are reluctant to initiate legal proceedings against families and will only ever action legal measures as a last resort, once all other interventions have failed to deliver the required improvement in attendance.

Students and families facing potential legal action will be supported by an identified member of staff in school. They will assist parents to fulfil their legal responsibility to ensure their child receives an appropriate full-time education. Attendance contracts are used to formalise expectations. Where these fail to make a difference or are not engaged with, legal actions will be taken. A penalty notice can be requested when a pupil has 10 unauthorised sessions of absence within a 10-week period. In severe cases, the school or local authority may decide to escalate the action to a full prosecution.

Penalty Notices – A penalty notice is issued to each parent for each child who has exceeded the 10-session threshold. Only two penalty notices can be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within a 3-year rolling period, any further offences could result in prosecution. The first penalty notice is charged at £160, if paid within 28 days, but can be reduced to £80, if paid within 21 days. There is no prompt payment reduction if a parent receives a second penalty notice. If a penalty notice is not paid within the 28-day period, the local authority may proceed to prosecution. Prosecutions can result in a fine of up to £2500, and/or a community order or imprisonment of up to 3 months.

Yours sincerely,

P Staniforth

Mr P Staniforth
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