**The Oswaldtwistle School**

**ATTENDANCE &**

**PUNCTUALITY**

**POLICY**

**November 2017**

**Attendance and Punctuality**

**Introduction**

Regular attendance is essential if students are to make the most of the educational opportunities made available to them whilst at The Oswaldtwistle School. Irregular attendance disrupts learning and undermines progress, leading to underachievement and disaffection.

At The Oswaldtwistle School we adopt a whole school approach to attendance and punctuality, the benefits of which are:

Responsibility is shared by all staff.

The policy impacts on all aspects of school life and relates to the value and ethos of our school.

**Policy Aims**

**1. To improve the overall attendance figures.**

This is achieved by establishing a high profile for attendance and punctuality so that regular attendance is part of The Oswaldtwistle School’s culture and ethos. We expect student attendance to be higher than that from their previous setting and to aspire to be above 96%.

**2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for staff, pupils and parents.**

There are procedures which monitor attendance on a regular (weekly) basis by both the Senior Management Team in The Oswaldtwistle School and the Pupil Support Officer. Pupils and parents are informed of the attendance rates and displays around the school are designed to celebrate good attendance figures. Attendance is discussed in key worker sessions and direct links are made between attendance and success at school.

**Procedure:**

 **If a pupil is absent**

* Parents are expected to notify the The Oswaldtwistle School Office on the first day before 9am. Telephone 01254 231553
* If this does not occur, the School Office will contact the home as part of our first day response.
* Should parents continue not to inform the school then on the third day the Attendance Officer will then conduct a home visit.

 **After 5 days consecutive unauthorised absence a case for a fixed penalty will be investigated.**

**The decision to authorise an absence remains with the school not the parent.**

**If at any time a pattern of non-attendance emerges the case is to be referred to the head teacher by the Attendance Officer and further action discussed.**

**3. To devise a constant system for monitoring attendance.**

Arrangements are in place for statutory registration procedures.

**Procedure:** Formal registration takes place between 08:45am and 09:15am and at the beginning of the afternoon session. The registers are held on Behaviour Watch and SIMS. Text messages and phone calls to parents to notify them of first day absence or lateness are issued at 9:15am. This procedure will be different for those students not on a full time timetable.

**4. To develop consistent communication and support for parents.**

Parents are involved in attendance issues at the earliest possible stage by designated members of staff (Key Worker or Form Tutor).

**Procedure:**

Should there be incidences of long term unauthorised absence, in addition to established procedures, the member of staff allocated to the pupil (Key Worker) will maintain contact with the home and the child. A sequence of letters notifying parents of absence patterns are triggered and issued in a staged response.

**5**. **Promote effective partnership with other agencies.**

Other agencies are informed and involved should the necessity arise. The Oswaldtwistle School operates an open door policy and actively supports multi-agency approaches that help improve attendance.

**Procedure:**

The host school or other agencies as appropriate are informed of the reintegration strategies for individual pupils and are kept aware of any issues surrounding attendance.

This whole school approach is reflected in the ethos of The Oswaldtwistle School where all staff aim to provide a welcoming, caring, learning environment in which pupils feel safe and valued. Regular attendance and punctuality are encouraged by all staff at The Oswaldtwistle School.

Multi agency plans developed to support pupils when necessary.

**6. Absence Tracking**

1. Formal registration takes place between 08:45am and 09:15am and at the beginning of the afternoon session.

2. All authorised and unauthorised non-attendance must be recorded with the appropriate symbol.

3. Late arrivals must report to the School Office and the register marked accordingly.

4. Any first day absence, of which the school has not previously been informed, should be reported to the School Office immediately, they will then contact the parent or carer by telephone. Repeated absence should be followed up in the same way daily and recorded on the School Information Management Systems (Behaviour Watch).

5. If after three days absence home contact has not been made the matter is to be referred to the Attendance Officer and a letter will be sent home and/or home visit arranged. This will be recorded on Behaviour Watch.

6. At 5 days the case for a fixed penalty notice will be investigated but only issued with the authority of the head teacher.

7. All communications should be recorded on the ‘Contact’ tab on Behaviour Watch.

**8. Leave in Term Time**

Taking a child out of school in term time will affect their schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child’s education.

**There is no automatic entitlement in law to take leave during school time**.

All applications for leave must be made, in advance, by the parent/carer to the head teacher.

Requests will only be authorised if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be exceptional.

Leave in term time will **not** be agreed by us at any time unless circumstances surrounding the request can be evidenced, by parents, to be exceptional.

In considering the request we will also look at various factors such as:

**The timing of the request.**

When a pupil is just starting the school, absences should be avoided as this is a very important transition period as your child needs to settle into their new environment as quickly as possible.

Pupils should not be absent where possible both immediately before and during assessment periods e.g. GCSE or any other public examinations.

Where a pupil’s attendance rate is already below 95% or will fall to or below that level as a result of taking leave.

Other periods of leave which the pupil may have had, either during the current or previous academic year

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

**In certain circumstances, parents’ risks losing their child’s place on the school roll if the pupil does not return to school on the agreed return date. Re-admission cannot be guaranteed.**

The specific circumstances which outline when a pupil can be removed from roll are laid out in Regulation 8 (1) (f) (i-iii) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (Amended 2010 and 2013)

**Use of Penalty Notices**

Parents/carers commit an offence if a child fails to attend school regularly and those absences are classed as unauthorised. Depending on the circumstances, such cases may result in prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution, which does not require an appearance in court unless the fine is unpaid after 28 days. Full payment of the penalty means that parents/carers can avoid being prosecuted and convicted.

The Oswaldtwistle School will consider issuing penalty notices in the following circumstances

* unauthorised absence
* truancy (including students found during truancy sweeps)
* Parentally condoned absence without good reason or medical confirmation.
* Persistent late arrival to school (after 9:15)
* Unauthorised absence in term time (please see notes on term time absence)
* Delayed return from authorised leave.

In every case a pupil must have had a minimum of 5 school days unauthorised absence in a term or 7 school days unauthorised absence over 2 consecutive terms before a penalty notice is considered.

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| **ATTENDANCE INITIATIVE HIERARCHY** |
| **Attendance level** | **Action** | **By whom** |
| **All pupils** | Pupils receive individual percentage attendance on a half termly basis and set a target for the next half term | Attendance ManagerForm tutors |
|  | Form tutors discuss attendance patterns and the impact of positive attendance on a regular basis.Pupil progress towards attendance targets is monitored | Form tutors |
|  | Key workers link attendance and attainment on a regular basis | All teaching staff |
| **95% and above- GREEN** | Rewards available- raffle draws, trips, | Attendance Manager |
| **90%- 94.9%****AMBER** | Letter of concern sent to all pupils in this category on a half termly basis. | Attendance Manager/SLT |
| **85%- 89.9%****YELLOW** | Parents to be invited into the school to be informed that their child will be monitored closely by the school and to be encouraged to contact the school if support is required.Attendance officer to identify pupils to be monitored at this level by the Key Worker. Pupils in this category due to extended illness (such as a broken leg) or a holiday will not be involved in monitoring. Pupils with holiday absences will be dealt with separately in accordance with Attendance PolicyDialogue with pupils on the monitoring list on a weekly basis to review the weeks attendance, encourage, question absence etc | Form tutor and Key Worker  |
|  | Dialogue with pupils on the monitoring list on a weekly basis to review the weeks attendance, encourage, question absence etc | Form tutor |
|  | On a half termly basis a letter of congratulations to be sent to pupils showing improved attendance | Attendance Manager- informed by FT |

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|  | Pupils failing to make progress to be referred to attendance panel. Clear targets to be set and timescale for monitoring identified | Attendance Officer to oversee. |
| **75- 84.9%****RED** | 1:1 meeting with pupil twice on a half termly cycle. Target set and communicated to parents. | Attendance officer |
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|  | Pupils falling below PA threshold should have an action plan to be completed by Attendance Officer | Attendance Officer |
|  | Referral to attendance panel. It may be necessary to refer pupils before the end of the cycle. | Attendance ManagerHT |
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| **Less than 75% attendance-****CRITICAL** | Full action plan to be implemented involving pupil, parents, school and other agencies. | Attendance officerHTOther agencies - WTWF |
|  | The School will use legal interventions to enforce attendance. | Attendance OfficerHTLocal Authority |