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Attendance Newsletter

Attendance is the entry level word we use, the gateway to all that is school, and it means so much more than a percentage figure written down! Regular attendance affects learning, future earning, wellbeing and a sense of belonging. We know that you as parents/carers want the best for your child and that having a good education helps to open up more opportunities in adult life.

Both The Oaks Academy and the DfE share the expectations that parents/carers will ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent e.g. sickness, only request Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances (and do so in advance) and book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.

Parents should also be prepared to work with the school and Local Authority if necessary to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance and proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan that would prevent the need for legal intervention.

Report an Absence

If your child is going to be absent from school we need to know as soon as possible. This can be done in two ways:

1. Sending an email to attendance@theoaksacademy.co.uk
2. Phoning the attendance line, [01270 661223](tel:01270661223) and clicking option 1

In both cases you need to clearly state the child's Name, Year group and reason for this absence.

Why attendance at school and punctuality is important?

- 98% attendance means that your child has missed 4 days in the school year
- 95% attendance means that your child has missed 10 days in the school year
- 90% attendance means that your child has missed 19 days in the school year
- 80% attendance means that your child has missed 38 days in the school year
- 5 minutes late each day means three whole days lost each year
- 17 days missed from school each year equates to a whole GCSE grade

Students are expected to be in school by 8.30 a.m. ready for the register to be taken at 8.45 a.m. Students arriving after this time will be coded as Late 'L'. Any students arriving after 9.30 am will be coded as 'U' which statically is an unauthorised absence.



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Unauthorised absences

10 or more unauthorised absences during a term, *may* result in you receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning Letter. If unauthorised absences continue within the monitoring period there will be a penalty of £60 per parent/carer per child, to be paid within 21 days. If not paid by the 21st day the penalty increases to £120 per parent/carer per child up to the 28th day. If full payment is not received, then the Local Authority will prepare the case for Court.

Illness Absence

As per school policy, school will only authorise up to 12 sessions (6 days) absence due to illness during the academic year. No further absences can be authorised for medical reasons unless formal medical evidence is provided. This can take the form of either a dated GP/Nurse appointment card, a compliment slip signed and dated by the GP/Nurse, a prescription or proof of prescribed medication relating to the current illness. 10 or more unauthorised absences during a term, *may* result in you receiving a Fixed Penalty Notice Warning Letter. If unauthorised absences continue within the monitoring period there will be a penalty of £60 per parent/carer per child, to be paid within 21 days. If not paid by the 21st day the penalty increases to £120 per parent/carer per child up to the 28th day. If full payment is not received, then the Local Authority will prepare the case for Court.

Exceptional Circumstances Leave of Absence in Term Time

As parents you have a legal duty to ensure that your child attends school on a regular basis. The Education Act 1996 makes it a criminal offence for a parent to “*fail to secure their child’s regular attendance at school*”. **Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence (holidays) during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.** The amendments give **parents no entitlement** to take their child out of school for a holiday in term time and require the Head Teacher and Governing Body to determine what the exceptional circumstances are. The decision will be made by the Deputy Headteacher, the Headteacher, and/or Governor. We will use our discretion to consider each request individually.

A **Leave of Absence Form** must be completed in advance and returned to the school. These forms can be collected from the School Office and, on completion, should be handed back to reception, so that a reply can be given.

- It must be made clear what the exceptional circumstance is that requires the leave of absence being taken in term time.
- On receipt of the request, you will be sent a response indicating whether the school is able to authorise the leave of absence or not.

If parents, contrary to what the school has said, still decide to take their child out of school for a leave of absence then the absence will be coded as **unauthorised**. This will lead to the school referring the matter to the Local Authority requesting a Penalty Notice to be issued.



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Penalties for unauthorised absence		
Timeline	One child	Two children
Paid within 21 days	£60 per parent	£60 per child = £120 per parent
After 21 days and before 28 days	£120 per parent	£120 per child = £240 per parent
After 28 days	You will be summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance	You will be summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your children's regular attendance

I would like to thank all parents and carers for their continued support in promoting high standards of attendance throughout The Oaks Academy.

J.Newham
Deputy Headteacher
The Oaks Academy