

Orsett Heath Academy

# Attendance

A Guide for Parents and Carers



## EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Every single day that a child is absent from school equates to missed opportunities. Time that can never truly be made up. The teachers from the 5 lessons each day are likely to have spent considerable time giving information that can never be totally repeated which means that the child may not fully understand the subsequent lessons that they are present for. Friends may have made social arrangements that the absent child could miss out on making relationships strained.

For some parents, 90% may seem like an acceptable level of attendance – after all, 90% in an examination would be a very good result indeed. However, over a school year, 90% will mean that the child has missed almost 4 school weeks of learning. The table below shows how attendance percentages can be misleading and what your child's attendance actually means.

100% Attendance

0 days missed

Excellent!

95% Attendance

9 Days missed  
(almost 2 weeks)

Stage 1 Intervention

90% Attendance

19 Days missed  
(almost 4 weeks)

Poor

85% Attendance

28 Days missed  
(almost 8 weeks)

Very Poor

80% Attendance

38 Days missed  
(almost 8 weeks)

Unacceptable &  
prosecution level

## WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

- Ensure that you establish a good routine in the mornings and evenings so that your child is prepared for the school day ahead.
- Ensure that your child attends regularly, on time and with the correct uniform and equipment.
- Arrange dental and medical appointments outside of school hours when possible.
- Take family holidays out of school time.
- Take an interest in your child's school work and social life in school.
- Always inform the school if your child is absent.
- Make an informed judgement if your child says they are ill. As a guide, if you had the ailment and would still go to work, send them to school.
- Discuss any problems or difficulties with the school and support school staff in their efforts to control difficult or challenging behaviour.

## INTERVENTIONS

The Education act 1996 states that every child should receive a suitable education.

Every student at William Edwards is expected to maintain an attendance that does not fall below 96%.

Should attendance fall below 94% (after an initial period of 4 weeks from the start of the Autumn term), parents/carers will receive an email and /or letter informing them of the need for improvement. Our full Intervention procedure is below and the case will progress to the next level should attendance not improve.

Stage	Details
STAGE 1	Parent/Carer will receive a letter informing them that their child's attendance has fallen below the school's acceptable level and informing them that an immediate and sustained improvement is needed. Parents will be invited to speak with the child's tutor should they feel the need to do so.
STAGE 2	Parent/Carer will receive a letter stating that an improvement has not been made and sustained since our previous letter and the Parent/Carer will be invited in for a meeting with their House Leader. At this meeting parents will have the chance to discuss reasons for poor attendance and given the opportunity to meet with Pastoral at a later date in order to complete a CAF which will enable them to access help from outside agencies. Minutes will be taken at the meeting and shared with parents.
STAGE 3	Parent/Carer will receive a letter inviting them in for a meeting with the Senior Attendance Officer where all interventions to date will be discussed. At this stage, depending on the level of engagement and reasons for poor attendance, a Parenting Contract may be considered or, if the school does not feel that this would be productive then the school will consider statutory action (Penalty Notice or prosecution).
STAGE 4	Parent/Carer will receive a letter notifying them of the outcome of stage 3 and an Application for a Penalty Notice or Prosecution will be made.

## WHY IS GOOD ATTENDANCE SO IMPORTANT?

### Regular attendance will ensure that your child:

- Experiences new things in life
- Has a balanced and all-round education
- Gains qualifications
- Makes friends
- Builds confidence and self esteem
- Develops awareness of difference cultures, religion, ethnicity and gender differences
- Feels included everyday
- Ensures that your child is well prepared for their working life – Regular learning = Regular earnings!

## LATENESS TO SCHOOL AND TERM TIME HOLIDAY

Being late to school causes disruption to your child, the teacher and other students. If your child arrives before 9am they will be marked as late on the register and sanctions will be made due to the lateness. If they arrive after 9am the mark will be an unauthorised absence unless you provide evidence as to why the extreme lateness occurred. If your child has an unavoidable medical appointment which means they will be late to school, please send the evidence (copy of appointment card/ text etc. in advance, along with an expected time of arrival to [office@oha.swecet.org.uk](mailto:office@oha.swecet.org.uk). Appointments should be made outside of school time whenever possible. In most cases, only a morning or afternoon registration mark will be authorised for unavoidable medical appointments.



There are 14 full weeks when your child is not expected in school and therefore Parents and carers are expected to arrange holidays out of term time. In most cases term time holiday will be marked as unauthorised and may incur a fixed penalty being issued by Thurrock Council. Only in exceptional circumstances can a Head Teacher authorise term time holiday however cost, special occasions and parents leave of absence are not considered as special circumstances. Please advise the school in advance by emailing [office@oha.swecet.org](mailto:office@oha.swecet.org) to give notice of pre-planned term time absence. Term time absence for holidays causes disruption to your child's education.



## Absence from School due to Illness

If your child has a genuine illness which prevents them from attending school, please inform the school before 8.45am on each day of absence by calling 01375802800. General illness is unlikely to last more than 4 days and therefore in order for us to authorise absence through illness on the 5<sup>th</sup> day and thereafter we will need medical evidence that your child is still unwell. This could be a copy of a prescription/medication, a note from the pharmacist or nurse stating that the child is too unwell for school. Please email this to [office@oha.swecet.org.uk](mailto:office@oha.swecet.org.uk). Please send your child back to school following an illness as soon as possible, having "one more day to get over it" will further damage your child's education and could ultimately lead to prosecution.

