


Attendance Policy



Oastlers Policy

Approved by Governing Body On	January 2024
To be Reviewed On	March 2024
Signed on Behalf of the Governing Body	

Introduction

Regular school attendance is essential if learners are to achieve their full potential, and make a positive contribution to their lives and the community in which they live. Not being in school means:

- The risk of poor educational outcomes
- The risk of being unable to secure further education, employment or training
- The risk of missing out on new and exciting experiences
- The risk of not having a peer/friendship group
- The risk of mental health deterioration
- The risk of being lonely and isolated
- The risk of not developing key skills

Oastlers School considers every one of those risk to be too significant. To put simply, when children miss school, it affects their learning, their ability to succeed and reduces opportunities and life chances.

The link between attendance in school and attainment is well known.

There is almost universal agreement that learning has not yet recovered from the pandemic. Evidence shows that almost two thirds of schools consider it is still having a major impact on learner achievement. While it is accepted that some of the reasons behind absence is often complex, improving attendance is not a matter for school alone, we rely on support from a number of external agencies with this matter. But most of all, we need your support as our parents and carers.

As a UNICEF Rights Respecting School, we strongly believe that all learners have the right to an education and that all learners should be encouraged to go to school and attend as described in Article 28. Children cannot be expected to achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

All of our school policies respect the UN Convention 'The Rights of the Child'. In particular, the Oastlers attendance policy refers directly to:-

- Article 28 - Every child has the right to an education

With this in mind, parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly.

The policy is published on the school's website. Parents/carers will receive this policy when their child joins the school. The policy will be reviewed and updated as necessary. In doing so, Oastlers will seek the views of learners and parents/carers.

Purpose / Background

The Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of Oastlers School, supported by our curriculum and policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and SEND.

Oastlers School considers the promotion of good attendance as a key priority in terms of raising the achievement of all learners.

The policy holds dear the notion that all learners must be:

- Safe
- Secure
- Successful

We are committed to working in partnership with learners, parents/carers, the local community and relevant agencies in order to ensure that we continue to improve the attendance of all our learners.

Objective

Our simple objective is to support and encourage all our learners achieve an attendance target of 95% by:

- Reducing the number of learners with persistent absence
- Reducing the percentage of unauthorised absences
- Demonstrating a year on year capacity to improve attendance

Safeguarding

Oastlers recognises that children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. The attendance policy has a direct link to the Safeguarding Policy; Understanding Behaviour and Relationships Policy; anti bullying strategies, Special Needs and Disability Policy (SEND) and the Missing Children and Truancy Policy.

Oastlers has also adopted the Local Authority Policies on Children Missing Education and Elective Home Education. All these policies have been endorsed by the School's Local Advisory Board/Trust Board, which support the School in all attempts to improve the attendance and safeguarding agenda.

Development and implementation of this policy will be considered under School obligations from the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Strategies

Oastlers School have high expectations of learners and will encourage good attendance by:

- Ensure absences are only authorised where the school are satisfied that the absence was genuine.
- Develop attendance incentive schemes (individual and group awards etc.) in accordance with the needs of the school.
- Work with learners to explore how good attendance can have short- and long-term benefits.
- Monitoring and referral procedures will be put in place and to ensure for learners whose attendance is a cause for concern are identified promptly. Home will be supported by school to

improve this by working together to develop an action plan.

- To provide support through the school's own pastoral systems, including appropriate contact with parents/carers.
- Analyse attendance data, looking for emerging patterns of non-attendance.
- Provide the LA/Trust with accurate attendance data as required
- To provide a stimulating and accessible curriculum, which ensures personalised learning is successful.
- The views of each learner and their parent(s)/carer(s) will be sought regarding their attendance and, this will also inform their attendance target setting process.
- The school's attendance leads will manage multi-agency networks which support the attendance improvement targets for individual learners.
- To ensure clear communication and guidance to learners and parents/carers regarding the importance of good attendance and the implications and consequences of absence.

If your child is absent

Parents/carers should make every effort to let the school know why their child is not **attending by 9.30am on the first day of absence.**

If you are unsure whether your child is too ill for school and would like some support please see below: -

[Is my child too ill for school? - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

Phone: 01274307456 (Bradford site) 01535281556 (Keighley site)

Email: Bradford Site - office@oastlers.co.uk
Keighley Site - Keighley@oastlers.co.uk

Alternatively if you have access to Arbor please send a message through the app.

Should no contact be made by parents/carers school will try to contact the parent/carers for an explanation as to why their child is absent. If telephone contact cannot be made and there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a learner, the safeguarding team will make a welfare home visit if appropriate. The DSL will decide whether a home visit or contact with another agency should then be made.

Where possible all medical appointments be made outside school hours. Parents/carers may be requested to provide medical evidence before any further absence can be authorised. This can be in the form of a doctor's note, text, appointment card, medication or prescription.

Requests for leave of absence

We expect parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods. Legislation states schools can give up to 10 days leave of absence **only** in exceptional circumstances and are at the discretion of the Headteacher. In the case of a Looked After Child the learner's respective social worker is the only person who can request such leave during term time.

The Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. The Headteacher can determine the number of school days a learner can be away from school if leave is granted.

A leave of absence of 3 days in a 6-week period may result in a fixed penalty notice (FPN). These days do not have to be 3 consecutive days. This is in line with the Local Authority Guidance. Fixed

Penalty Notices are calculated as follows:

£60 per parent per child if paid in 21 days.
£120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but before 28 days.

Failure to pay before 28 days is likely to lead to prosecution.

Authorised Absence

Absence can be authorised for a number of reasons. These include, but not limited to:

- Illness
- Medical or dental reasons but we do ask that check-ups and non– emergency appointments are made during holiday times or after school
- Education off site
- Suspension
- Religious observances
- Approved sporting activity
- Enforced closure for the whole school
- Any other exceptional circumstance

Rewarding Attendance

School has a system of rewards and incentives for good attendance. These rewards are chosen by our learners.

The promotion of regular school attendance can facilitate positive peer relationships, which is a protective factor for mental health and well-being. At Oastlers the views and opinions of learners is recognised by holding termly school council meetings in which learners put forward their ideas around what incentives/rewards they would like for good attendance.

Attendance data is shared during weekly celebration assemblies and displayed on a board in school. Announcements are also posted on the school website. Incentives include:

Attendance Hero's

Can your child be in school every day for the next day days? 10 days = 100% attendance with amazing prizes to be won! Every ten days names will be entered into a draw for a chance of winning the prize and be celebrated as an 'Attendance Hero'!



Class rewards

Classes will be rewarded for excellent attendance. Classes with the highest attendance each week will receive prizes including 'dress down Fridays' or an additional breaktime.

Parent's breakfast

Our parents and carers work incredibly hard to support their children, ensuring they attend school as much as possible. We would like to thank parents for their support and there will be opportunities for parents to attend an 'attendance breakfast' for excellent attendance. This will be held termly.

Certificates and letters

Certificate and celebration letters will be posted to parents and carers acknowledging 100%, 95% and most improved attendance.



Implementation

- Attendance reports are run daily. Learners whose attendance is a concern are quickly and easily identified. This is shared with the attendance leads and relevant agencies if there is a concern.
- Learners with attendance of 95% or below, will trigger a letter response in the school's attendance system.
- A series of letters are used to notify parents/carers of persistent absence and school will request an attendance meeting. During this first meeting an action plan will be agreed by home and school. The plan will last a minimum of 4 weeks. (please see appendix)
- When there is little/no improvement in a learner's attendance, despite intervention, a second meeting is held and a representative from the local authority will be invited.
- Punctuality is also monitored and part of our procedures.
- All correspondence is recorded on CPOMs.

Enforced Closure of the School

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 regulation 6(5) allows for the closure of a school in exceptional circumstances. Examples of circumstances in which learners could be unable get to school because of serious disruption to travel caused by:

- A weather-related emergency, such as snow or flooding,
- A natural disaster, such as the impact on air travel of a volcanic eruption,
- A health-related emergency, such as restrictions on travel in certain areas related to a foot and mouth outbreak,
- Travel disruption caused by the rationing or non-availability of fuel,
- In the case of a learner for whom transport to school is provided by the school or a local authority, and whose home is not in walking distance of the school, that the transport is not available.

Roles and responsibilities

- The school's attendance lead is **Rebecca Fyfe**
- She will lead on attendance and the monitoring of all learners with individual attendance targets.
- That all statutory requirements are met.
- Reports on learner attendance are submitted to the Local Governing Body and Trustees.
- The attendance lead will take account of the views of their learners, parent(s)/carer(s) and that necessary multi-agency networking takes place.

Further information

Guidance for parents on school attendance (Department for Education)

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/aaa-guide-for-parents-on-school-attendance.pdf

Resources for families (Children's Commissioner)

www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/back-into-school/resources-for-families/

Attendance (Bradford Council)

www.bradford.gov.uk/education-and-skills/school-support-services/attendance/

Working together to improve school attendance (Department for Education)

www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

Pupil attendance in school data (Department for Education)

explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/pupil-attendance-in-schools

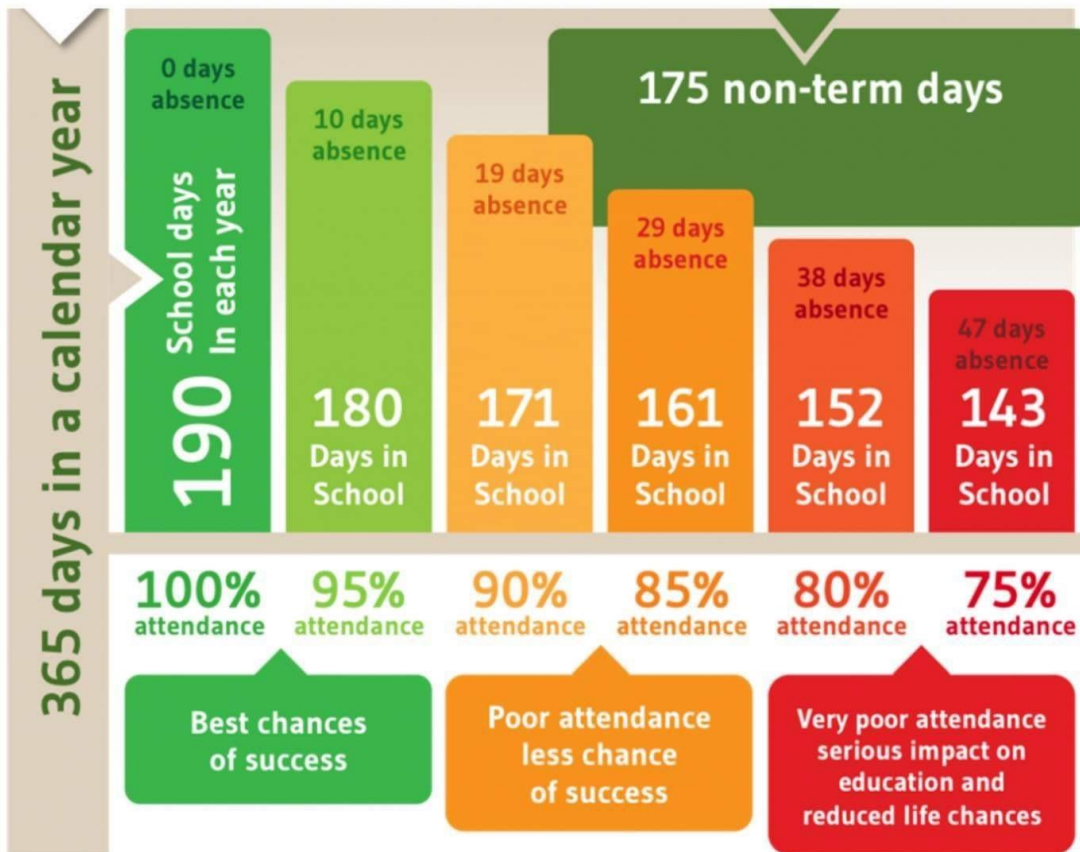
Improving attendance: good practice for schools and trusts (Department for Education)

www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/improving-attendance-good-practice-for-schools-and-multi-academy-trusts

This policy is informed by guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE): 'Working together to improve school attendance' and 'Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance': <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

Appendix 1

Impact of absence table



DID YOU KNOW? A two week holiday in term time means that the highest attendance you can achieve is 94.7%

Appendix 2

Parent/carer letter 1

Dear Parent/carer

I am writing to you to congratulate **(name)** for achieving **over 95%** attendance this term.

Thank you for all your efforts in supporting attendance at school.

Keep it up!

Yours sincerely

Lyndsey Brown
Headteacher

Appendix 3

Parent/carer letter 2

Dear Parent/carer

I am writing to you, to congratulate (**name**) for achieving **100%** attendance this term.

Thank you for all your efforts in supporting school attendance.

Keep it up!

Yours sincerely

Lyndsey Brown
Headteacher

Appendix 4

Parent/carer letter 3

Dear parent/carer

As you are aware we take learners attendance very seriously. I would like to draw your attention to your child's registration certificate attached. I am concerned as we deem an acceptable level of attendance to be a minimum of 95%.

Irregular school attendance may have a serious impact on your child's academic progress. We understand there may at times be unavoidable and genuine reasons for your child's absence, of which the school should be informed of on their first day of absence.

If you would like to discuss this letter or require any support from school regarding your child's attendance/welfare please do not hesitate to contact Rebecca Fyfe if your child attends our Bradford site on 01274 307456 or Pasquale Hester on 01535 281556 for those attending our Keighley site.

Attendance Percentage	Number of days absence per year	Equivalent time missed by the end of Year 11
100%	0	0
95%	10	$\frac{1}{4}$ of a year
90%	20	$\frac{1}{2}$ of a year
85%	30	$\frac{3}{4}$ of a year
80%	40	1 whole year

Yours sincerely

Lyndsey Brown
Headteacher

Appendix 5

Parent/carer letter 4

Dear Parent/carer

Further to our previous correspondence dated....., we have seen no significant improvement to your child's attendance. I have attached your child's attendance certificate to this letter for your attention.

As you are aware we take learners attendance very seriously. At Oastlers we strive for every learner to be attending school at least 95% of the time.

To discuss this further, I am inviting you to a meeting at school to talk about improving your child's attendance. The meeting will be held on:

Date: Time:

It is important that you attend this meeting so school and home can work together to improve your child's attendance.

If this time/date is not suitable, please do not hesitate to contact school to rearrange as soon as possible.

Following this meeting, school and home will agree to an action plan to improve **(name)** attendance. This plan will be monitored for a minimum 4-week period.

We look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

Lyndsey Brown
Headteacher

Appendix 6

Parent/carer letter 5

Dear parent/carer

I remain concerned that following the attendance meeting on..... where a plan was agreed, **(name)** attendance has shown no significant improvement. I have attached a copy of the agreed plan and the attendance certificate to this letter for your attention.

It is the local authorities view that parents/carers should be left with no doubt that persistent poor attendance is unacceptable. This impacts on your child's education. As a result, I would like to invite you to a meeting in school to discuss further continued persistent absence.

This meeting will be held on:

Date: Time:

Anila Liaqat, Senior attendance officer for the local authority, will also be present at this meeting, to offer further support and advice.

If this appointment is not convenient, please call to arrange another appointment.

Bradford site: Rebecca Fyfe on 01274 307456

Keighley site: Pasquale Hester on 01535281556

I am are sure that by working together, we will see some progress.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Lyndsey Brown
Headteacher

Appendix 7

Attendance Codes

Code	Full name	Description
The student is counted as present.		
/ or \	Present am or pm	Present in school during registration.
L	Late	Late arrival before the register has closed
The student is counted as present, at an Approved Educational Activity.		
B	Educated off Site	The student is at an off-site supervised educational activity approved by the school.
J	Interview	At a job interview, or interviewing with another educational establishment.
P	Sporting Activity (Approved)	Pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.
V	Educational trip	A residential trip organised by the school or a supervised strictly educational trip arranged by an approved organisation.
W	Work Experience	A student in the final two years of compulsory education is attending work experience.
The student is counted as absent, authorised.		
C	Other Authorised Absence	Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence.
E	Excluded	If a student is excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked E, for up to the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period (referred to as 'suspensions' by the DfE from Autumn 2021) or permanent exclusion.
H	Family Holiday (Agreed)	A leave of absence for a family holiday is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.
M	Medical/Dental Appointments	The student is absent due to a medical or dental appointment that could not be made outside of school hours.
R	Religious Observance	The student is absent for religious observance on a day designated by the religious body.
S	Study Leave	Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils for public exams. Students should still be able to come into school to revise.
T	Traveller Absence	Used when Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) or New Travellers are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school.
I	Illness	This Illness code can be used for any form of illness, if you don't want to distinguish Covid-19 illness.
I01	Illness	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for students absent due to non-coronavirus related illness (unless the truthfulness of the claim is in question). This code should not be used for medical or dental appointments.
I02	Confirmed case of Covid-19	This code maps to the statutory mark of I. This is for pupils who have a confirmed case of coronavirus.
The student is counted as absent, unauthorised.		

G	Family Holiday (Not Agreed)	The Holiday was not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the headteacher.
N	No Reason	The reason for the absence has not been provided. If no reason for an absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time, it should be changed to O.
O	Unauthorised Absence	If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
U	Late (After Register Closes)	Schools should keep registers open for a reasonable amount of time, after which the student should be marked with a U.

These codes are not counted so will not affect attendance figures.

D	Dual Registration	The student is registered at another school and attends it during this lesson e.g. students at a pupil referral unit. Schools should only record attendance and absences for sessions the pupil is scheduled to attend at their school.
X	Non-statutory school age absence	Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	The school is closed due to an unavoidable cause or the student is unable to travel to the school. It can also be used where the pupil is in custody (for less than four months). This code is collected for statistical purposes but does not contribute to your attendance figures.
Z	Pupil Not On Roll	This code can be used when setting up registers in advance of pupils joining. Schools must take attendance for pupils from the first day the student should be attending the school.
#	School Closed To Pupils	This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as if the school is used as a polling station.

The codes below should only be used to record attendance for the Spring term 2022 and prior.

X01	Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to be in school	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Sessions non-compulsory school-age children are not expected to attend. This code should only be used for early years students who have not yet passed the 1st January, 1st April or 1st September following their 5th birthday.
X02	Self-isolating COVID-19 symptoms	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Students self-isolating because they have symptoms of coronavirus but they have not yet had a positive test.
X05	Quarantine requirement	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Student required to be in quarantine on arrival in, or return to, the UK.
X06	Shielding	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. Students who have been identified as clinically vulnerable and advised that they should not attend school.
X07	Government attendance restrictions	This code maps to the statutory mark of X. To be used for national restrictions to education settings in line with Government advice.
X08	Advised by Public Health Directors not to attend school	To be used for local restrictions to education settings in line with advice from Directors of Public Health.
X09	NHS test and trace required self-isolation	The student is required to self-isolate due to contact with a confirmed case, by NHS test and trace.