



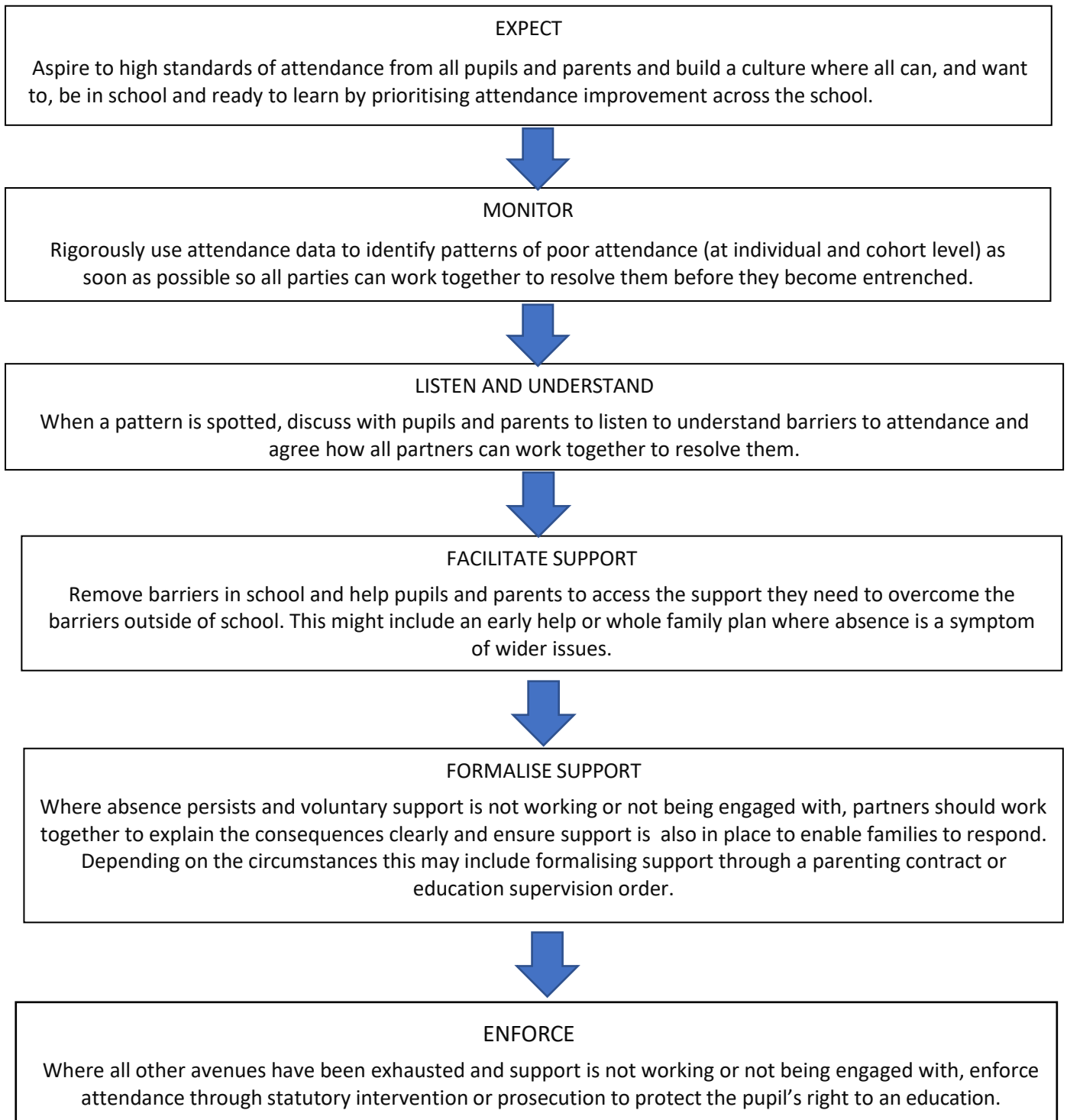
Attendance Policy

Policy author	V Musson
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Review frequency	Annually
Next review date	October 2024
Approved by	Local Committee Volunteers

INTRODUCTION

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. Our school is a calm, orderly, safe and supportive environment. We aim to be a nurturing community that promotes our three school rules; ready respectful and safe. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our pupils. We believe high attainment depends on good attendance. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Working together to improve attendance



WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

You can support by:

- Ensuring regular and appropriate bed times
- Helping with additional learning at home
- Having uniform and equipment prepared the night before
- Providing a healthy breakfast
- Reporting any academic or social concerns to us quickly
- Being positive about school (even if your own experience was less than positive)

To help us do this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our newsletter and on our website
- Report to you at least termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments
- Celebrate good attendance in school, with all staff members playing an important role in doing this
- Share ideas and resources with you which can have a positive effect on your child's attendance

WHY BEING PUNCTUAL IS IMPORTANT

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child missed the start of the day they can miss important opportunities to prepare for the day and be *ready* to learn.

Minutes late per day	Equivalent of missing
5 minutes	3.4 school days a year
10 minutes	6.9 school days a year
15 minutes	10.3 school days a year
20 minutes	13.8 school days a year
30 minutes	20.7 school days a year

We prioritise our morning routines to ensure that all children have a positive start to every school day. Late arriving pupils can disrupt this routine and can cause the child arriving late to be embarrassed. This embarrassment can lead to absence to avoid being late.

The school day starts at 8:40am and finishes at 3:00pm. All children should be supervised when on school site by an adult before 8:40am (unless attending pre-teach or breakfast club) and after 3:00pm (unless attending after school club).

	AM register	PM register		
Register opens	8:40am	EYFS & KS1 12:30pm	LKS2 1:00pm	UKS2 1:20pm
Register closes	8:50am	EYFS & KS1 12:40pm	LKS2 1:10pm	UKS2 1:30pm

UNDERSTANDING TYPES OF ABSENCE

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority (County Attendance Team) using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- absences which have never been properly explained
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed
- excessive illness without medical evidence

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, never cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and can often, make things worse.

ABSENCE PROCEDURES

If your child is absent you must contact us as soon as possible for each day of absence via:

- Phone call
- Scholarpack App message
- E-mail office.2304@queen-emmas.oxon.sch.uk

If you want more detailed support on attendance, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance.

If your child is absent and you have not notified us we will:

- Call the contacts on our records to establish the reason for the child's absence
- Carry out a home visit if we are concerned about the children's welfare
- Invite you into school to attend an Attendance Review Meeting with a School Leader and put a Parent Contract in place to secure improved attendance
- Refer the matter to the County Attendance Team if attendance moves below 90% - Persistent Absence

OUR STRATEGY

All attendance is recorded on Scholarpack. This system enables us to monitor and run reports to identify patterns of absence, any child who is at risk of becoming a persistent absentee or is a persistent absentee. For some children, meet and greet, invitations to breakfast club or pre teach sessions can help to improve attendance. To reduce persistent and severe absence we will offer an Early Help Assessment to families where the Parent Contract has had limited impact.

Persistent Absence (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

90 percent attendance (missing 10% of school sessions) means a child is absent from lessons for the equivalent of one half day every week. Over five years this is the equivalent of almost half a school year of education and a huge amount of lost learning.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA threshold of 10% or is at risk of moving towards that threshold is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully, and academic support is provided where absence affects attainment. However, such academic support cannot replace the high-quality teaching delivered to the whole class, where learning is introduced and scaffolded in deliberately sequenced small steps and children have the opportunity to participate in whole class discussion or interactive activities to support their learning.

All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to a Parent Contract or an attendance focus within their Team Around the Family, Child in Need or Child Protection Plan. The Parent Contract or TAF/CIN/CP plan will include attendance and punctuality targets and may detail provision to support the improved attendance such as:

- allocation of additional support through their teacher, a Learning Support Assistant, Thrive Practitioner or the School Leader mentor;
- individual incentive programmes agreed with parents;
- review your child's medical needs and whether a Health Care Plan is necessary to support improved attendance;
- review whether a referral to the School Health Nurse team or similar external agencies is appropriate to support improved attendance;
- requesting that an Early Help Assessment is completed with you and consider convening a Team around the Family.
- refer the matter to the County Attendance Team if attendance moves below 90%.

The majority of PA cases are made known to the County Attendance team through a referral by school.

Telephone numbers:

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. This means we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence. It is the responsibility of parents and carers to make sure the school has their current phone number on file at all times, and preferably also a current email address

(please see Home School Agreement). Please help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. There will be regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.

The County Attendance Team:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage with concerns, including attendance concerns, and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the County Attendance Team at the Local Authority. At the school's request, they may issue a Penalty Notice per parent/carer, per child (currently £60 rising to £120 if unpaid after 21 days. If unpaid after 28 days a summons to Court will be issued for each unpaid Penalty Notice for prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. This can result in a criminal record and a fine of up to £2,500, a Community Order, Parenting Order or ultimately a custodial sentence). The legislation is the Education Act 1996 sec. 444(1) and 444(1A).

Parents that have previously been issued with Penalty Notices for their children's unauthorised absences, in the event of further unauthorised absences may receive summonses to Court.

“If any child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his/her parent is guilty of an offence.”

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the County Attendance Team themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice.

Their telephone number is: 01865 323513.

Their email address is: attendance@oxfordshire.gov.uk

ATTENDANCE CODES

Illness (I)

Common illnesses

Most illnesses can be classified as one of a few minor health conditions. Whether or not you send your child to school will depend on how severe you judge the illness to be. This guidance can help you to make that judgement. If you're concerned about your child's health, consult a health professional.

When deciding whether or not your child is too ill to attend school. Ask yourself:

- Is your child well enough to carry out the activities of the school day? If not, keep your child at home and consult your GP as appropriate.
- Does your child have a condition that could be passed on to other children or school staff? If so, keep your child at home.
- Would you take a day off work if you had this condition? If so, keep your child at home.

The NHS provide advice on the 'Is my child too ill for School' page <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Religious Observance (R)

Our School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent or carer to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent or carer's religious body. Please let us know in advance if you plan for your child to have a day's absence from school for religious observance.

Medical/Dental Appointments (M)

Parents and carers are advised, where possible, to make medical and dental appointments for their child outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, children should attend school for part of the day. The parent or carer should show the appointment card to school.

Exceptional Leave (C)

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's 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.

Amendments to the registration regulations, which came into force in September 2013, remove references to family holidays and extended leave as well as the threshold of ten school days.

The amendments make it clear that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Should a school not agree to grant leave and parents take their child on holiday regardless, this will be counted as unauthorised absence (truancy).

The school and our county attendance officer may consider issuing a penalty fine of £60.

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

1. It is widely known that the link between a student's attendance and attainment is irrefutable.
2. Early poor attendance habits follow through into secondary school, further education and employment.
3. Graduates earn, on average, double that of young people that leave school with no qualifications.
4. All schools in Oxfordshire are encouraged to adopt a policy of not authorising Exceptional Leave.
5. A member of the Leadership Team will meet personally with every family applying for Exceptional Leave to stress the importance of good school attendance habits and links between attendance & attainment.
6. Exceptional Leave is most unlikely to be authorised in Years 2 and 6.
7. Exceptional leave is most unlikely to be authorised when a student's attendance is less than 95%.
8. Exceptional leave should always be refused when school is aware of any truancy.
9. Exceptional leave should always be refused when requests are regular (annual) or when patterns become identifiable.
10. Reasons for Exceptional Leave should be logged on the pupil's record and shared as part of the transfer/transition process.

The County Attendance Team can issue Penalty Notices for any unauthorised 'Exceptional Leave'. Penalty Notices can be issued to each parent/carer concerned. Please note that it will be per parent per child.

Payment within 21 days of receipt of notice is £60 and £120 if paid after this period but within 28 days. If the Penalty Notice remains unpaid after 28 days you will each receive a summons to Oxford Magistrates Court. If unauthorised leave is repeated the County Attendance Team may summons each parent to Court without a Penalty Notice being issued.

Children Missing Education (CME)

As a result of daily admissions registration, schools are particularly well placed to notice when a child has gone missing. If a member of school staff becomes aware that a child may have run away or gone missing, they must try to establish with the parents/ carers, what has happened.

If this is not possible, or the child is missing, the designated safeguarding lead should, together with the class teacher, assess the child's vulnerability by making reasonable enquiries, and where appropriate refer any concerns about the child to Children's Social Care.

Schools must monitor attendance closely and address poor or irregular attendance. If it is impossible for pupils' poor attendance is referred to the local authority.

In the more general circumstances of a child going missing who is not known to any other agencies, and there are no immediate safeguarding concerns, the Head Teacher must investigate and inform the Pupil Tracking Officer and Education Welfare Officer of any child who has not attended for 10 consecutive school days without provision of reasonable explanation.

All schools have a safeguarding duty in respect of their pupils, and this includes investigating unexplained absences.

- Inquiries pertaining to children missing education will be addressed to: childrenmissingeducation@oxfordshire.gov.uk, managed by the County Attendance Team.

Each local authority is required to have a named person responsible for CME in their area. For Oxfordshire County Council as of Autumn 2018 to date, that person is Deborah Bell 07909 882843 deborah.bell@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

For further information on Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SCB) procedures for Children Missing in Education please refer to:

https://oxfordshirescb.proceduresonline.com/p_ch_missing_educ.html

Summary: All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Regular attendance supports optimising your child's attainment.

The people responsible for attendance matters in school are:

Name	Role	Contact
Amanda Cox	Learner Engagement	01993 704770
Victoria Musson	Headteacher	01993 704770

SUMMARY

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures & it's attendance policy to parents and to promote attendance. School attendance data must be available to the Local Authority & the Department for Education. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend. All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Regular attendance supports optimising your child's attainment.