

# Oriel High School : Attendance Policy

**Date Amended: September 2018**

**Date of Ratification: 26.09.18**

**Next Review Date: September 2019**

## Aim

The staff and Governors of Oriel High School strongly believe that all students benefit from regular attendance. To achieve this, we do all we can to encourage parents/carers to ensure that their son/daughter achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems which prevent full attendance are identified quickly and acted upon promptly. It is only by attending school regularly that students are able to achieve their full potential.

**Attendance Target for Oriel for Sept 2018 to July 2019 is: 96%.**

## Purpose

To impress upon all students the benefits of good attendance and to make them aware of our expectations that they will:

- Attend school regularly.
- Attend school punctually.
- Discuss with their Learning Mentor any problems preventing them from attending school.

We expect that parents/carers will:

- Encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- Ensure that their son/daughter arrives at school punctually.
- Provide a note explaining absence on the student's first day back at school following absence.
- Contact the school via, for example, the Student Absence Line on each day of absence.
- Make non-urgent dental and doctor appointments out of school time.
- Follow the Oriel Family Group of School's policy with regard to taking holidays during school term time.
- Refrain from organising any holidays or visits which impinge on school time.

We expect students to:

- Arrive at school by 8.15am and be ready to register in the mentor room at 8.20am.
- Arrive on time to PM registration/mentor time.
- Move purposefully between lessons and arrive in class on time.
- Bring in a written explanation from the parent/carer to explain any absence.
- Catch up on any missed learning resulting from absence.

## **Procedures and Practices**

Oriel High School will:

- Provide a welcoming, caring atmosphere for children.
- Encourage good attendance.
- Celebrate excellent attendance and acknowledge efforts made by students who attend school on a regular basis and or those who make a concerted effort to improve their attendance.
- Keep accurate records of school attendance and lesson attendance for all students
- Monitor the attendance of all students and use established procedures to ensure that students with poor attendance are discussed, closely monitored and appropriate intervention programmes put in place.
- Ensure parents/carers have an accurate record of attendance for their child/children through Go4Schools and reports to parents.
- Ensure all staff are aware and fully understand their roles and responsibilities to promote good attendance and ensure there are consistent lines of communication between home and school.
- Contact parents/carers as soon as possible when a student fails to attend and no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Contact parents/carers of students who are attending irregularly to express their concern and to clarify the expectation of the school and the LA with regard to regular school attendance.
- Refer on-going irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Service.- (N.B. irregular/poor attendance may provide the basis for prosecution or a fixed penalty notice being issued by the Education Welfare Service)
- Follow DfE guidelines with regard to persistent absence to ensure the school meets the Government guidelines

## **Punctuality**

- The importance of punctuality will be reinforced by Learning Mentors and teachers.
- Students late to lessons will be challenged and, if necessary, appropriate sanctions applied.
- Lateness will be monitored and may be recorded as unauthorised absence.
- Lateness may provide the basis for prosecution by the Education Welfare Service.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of staff**

### All staff

- To be good role models.
- Make attendance and punctuality a priority by praising and rewarding students with good attendance and punctuality.
- Keep accurate registers, taking mentor and lesson registers promptly
- Set work and follow the school's policy on providing opportunities for absent students to catch up with work.

- Inform appropriate staff when students may be absent from lessons because, for example, they are on a school trip or representing the school in an extra curricular activity.
- Follow the school procedures for lateness.
- Support attendance initiatives
- If there are child protection concerns, bring to the attention of the designated Child Protection Officer.
- Where a student leaves the school and was subject to a CP Plan, their information and records are transferred to the new school immediately and their social worker informed.

### Mentors

As well as the above points ensure that:

- AM and PM registers are accurate.
- School procedures for students who fail attend mentor time are adhered to
- Advise students of their weekly attendance
- Students understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality

Mentors should also:

- Look at patterns of absence for individual students and refer any causes of concern to the Pastoral Team
- Liaise with parents so that they are aware that their child's attendance is a cause for concern and the impact this is or may have.
- Alert the pastoral teams immediately should a student not return to school after a school holiday so this can be investigated and referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if necessary.

### Deputy Heads of Communities

- To support and liaise with Mentors, Subject Leaders and Heads of Community on a regular basis so that appropriate action plans can be agreed and actioned.
- To be directly responsible for monitoring and working with students whose attendance is below 90%.
- To carry out termly attendance reviews for students whose attendance is below 90%.
- To co ordinate the work for students who are excluded or absent from school due to long term illness.
- To monitor attendance of designated mentor groups
- To assist the Attendance Officers in completing referrals to the EWS.
- To monitor attendance accuracy of am/pm registration systems.

### Heads of Learning Communities and Sixth Form

- To ensure attendance data is accurate and reported to the headship team and governors on a termly basis
- To ensure accurate attendance returns are made to the DfE
- To ensure attendance data is reported to parents ,students, governors and staff on a regular basis
- To encourage a positive and proactive approach to attendance
- Provide a strategic overview of attendance by utilising data to inform practice , prioritise resources that will raise achievement and prevent disaffection
- To ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all those are communicated and understood
- Where attendance needs to be improved to coordinate an action plan for improvement and evaluate the impact of actions
- To agree and establish a system of data collection and analysis which as a minimum should include:
  1. Authorised and unauthorised
  2. Attendance data at group, and year level

3. Student profiling
4. Reasons for absence
5. Outcomes of attendance strategies used by the school
6. To manage the schools communications in relation to attendance with students and key stakeholders

#### Pastoral Coordinators

- To work with named students and implement appropriate action plans to improve named student punctuality and attendance.
- To make regular contact with parents of named students whose attendance / punctuality is a cause for concern.
- To monitor named student's attendance and punctuality and report concerns to the Head of Learning Community.

#### Attendance/SIMS Officers

- Contact parents as soon as possible when a student fails to attend and no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Attend fortnightly meeting with the Pastoral Teams.
- Prepare referrals for EWO.
- Produce and provide the data required by Mentors, Attendance leader and Learning Community teams and Sixth Form
- To collate monthly attendance records for students who have been identified as 'Children Looked After' and send to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- To collate fortnightly attendance records for students who are 'Travellers' and send to the designated member for the 'travellers service'
- To make first day phone calls to parents of students who are absent and have been identified as students at risk.
- To follow up any absence where no explanation has been received

#### Subject Leaders

- Make attendance and punctuality an agenda item for meetings.
- Support subject staff actions for poor punctuality.
- Look for patterns of absence and consider the impact of the curriculum and student grouping upon attendance together with other possible causes.
- Ensure that Learning Community teams are updated on students causing concern in their subject area.
- To monitor and support subject staff in setting work for students who are excluded or absent from school due to ill health.
- To implement appropriate strategies for students whose attendance is a cause for concern, so that they can achieve their potential
- To analyse attendance of individual and groups of students within their designated subject area

#### **Holidays**

There is no legal entitlement to holidays during term time. Amendments to the 2006 regulations remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence** during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Please be advised that documentary evidence may be required in the event of such a request. We have always expected parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays and we have always ensured that our dates are published in advance.

## **Changing Schools**

A student will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the students will be leaving this school and starting the next.
- The address of the new school.
- The new home address if known.

The students' school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that school staff have not been given the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

## **Good Attendance**

The school will reward students with good attendance in line with the school's reward policy.

## **Non-Attendance**

When a student does not attend school we will respond in the following manner:

- If the student has a record of poor attendance the school will contact the parent/carer at home or at work on the first day of absence.
- On the first day of absence if no note or telephone call has been received from the parent/carer the school will contact them.
- Learning Community teams will inform parents of persistent problems regarding punctuality.
- If absence persists, a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service.
- Failure to comply with the expectation set by the Education Welfare Service may result in further action, e.g. Fixed Penalty Notices and court prosecution.

Please refer to DfE circular to parents/carers "Is Your Child Missing Out?", "Every day counts" and or information leaflets and letters sent by the school

**Related Policies:** Child Protection Policy and Child Protection Procedures

**FIXED PENALTY NOTICES-** Regular and punctual attendance at school is vital if students are to maximise their opportunities to achieve success across a broad range of activities. Securing such attendance outcomes is also a legal requirement and a responsibility that is placed upon parents.

The Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme for unsatisfactory school attendance is in use in West Sussex. A Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine given for 'unauthorised' absence from school. Only the Headteacher can authorise absence from school.

Absences which are not 'authorised' by the school are subject to consideration under the Fixed Penalty Notice Scheme. This Notice, issued by the West Sussex Education Welfare Service, requires the payment of a fine of £60 per parent per child. Each case will be looked at individually, initially within the school and then by the Local Authority (West Sussex).

When a student has reached a figure of 10 school sessions (i.e. 10 half-days) missed without 'authorisation' by the school, the parents concerned will be issued with a written warning requiring an immediate improvement in the child's attendance. Any further 'unauthorised' absence over the next 15 school days can lead to the FPN fine being levied.

For 'unauthorised' holidays in term time, no warning period is given since parents will be aware of the consequences.

#### Non-Payment of Fixed Penalty Notices

Parents need to be aware that if the fine is not paid within 28 days, it goes up to £120 per parent per child. Non-payment within 42 days requires the Local Authority to commence prosecution in the Magistrates Courts for the original offence of poor school attendance. If proven, this could result in a fine of up to £1,000 per parent per child and/or a parenting order or a community service order.