

SIR FREDERIC OSBORN SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY – STUDENTS

Principles

School Policies at Sir Frederic Osborn School are written in line with the five areas outlined in Every Child Matters.

- Being healthy
- Staying safe
- Enjoying & achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic wellbeing

Every child has a fundamental right to be educated. Parents / Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school, as stated in The Education Act 1996.

Sir Frederic Osborn School considers regular attendance to be essential for effective learning, if students are to make the most of the educational opportunities available to them. Parents / Carers and teachers have a duty to ensure maximum attendance at school.

The school is committed to working with parents and students, to ensure that high levels of attendance are achieved.

Irregular attendance can:

- Disrupt continuity of learning.
- Undermine educational progress.
- Lead to under-achievement and low attainment.
- Harm prospects in later life.
- Increase the risk of becoming victims of crime or anti-social behaviour.

Students will be absent from time to time for unavoidable reasons such as illness, but we have a responsibility to discourage students from being absent from school for trivial reasons and to teach students about the importance of good attendance. Morning registration will take place at the start of school at 8.30am. The registers will remain open for 20 minutes. Any students arriving after this time will be marked as having an unauthorised absence unless there is an acceptable explanation

Relationship to Other Policies

Behaviour for Learning, Learning and Teaching.

Aims

- Sir Frederic Osborn School aims to ensure maximum student attendance through valuing high levels of attendance and punctuality. The staff at the school aim to encourage students to take full advantage of their educational opportunity by attending school regularly and on time.
- However, the school will also recognise external factors, which may influence a student's attendance and work in partnership with Parents / Carers, the student and the Education Welfare Service to address any difficulties. This will be particularly prevalent in those cases where a planned and phased reintegration is required, to support a student's return to school. Furthermore, this may include liaison with other agencies as and if appropriate.
- Attendance is analysed by individual students, specific groups of students (gender, ethnicity, disadvantaged, SEND, CLA), form groups and year groups. Persistent Absentee (PA) students are currently defined as students who have less than 85% attendance, however in September 2015 this will move to 90%.

The responsibility of the School

The Staff at Sir Frederic Osborn School have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that the registers are taken at morning registration and every lesson, and that all students are aware of and follow the attendance and lateness procedures
- Praise good attendance and punctuality
- Record every absence in accordance with the categories identified by the DCSF and check with Parents / Carers if no contact or letter is received to explain the absence
- Identify emerging patterns of attendance, including punctuality, and investigate unauthorised absences

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- Record arrival times and inform Parents / Carers of concerns regarding lateness
- Ensure that there are clear communication systems between members of staff in school to address attendance concerns, and to ensure that the information is shared with the designated staff members
- Directors of Learning to meet regularly with the Education Welfare Service to discuss attendance concerns. This information will be passed to the link member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- The Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) will meet regularly with designated staff. A baseline threshold of students with 90 % attendance and below will be the starting point for discussions re: attendance concerns. This baseline will change to 92% in September 2015.
- The Heads of Year and Attendance Officer in school will work in partnership with the AIO to identify a plan of action with those students identified. Additional cases may also be raised where there are concerns
- Make contact with Parents / Carers to investigate attendance concerns by phoning, writing or arranging meetings in school or home visits in appropriate cases

The responsibility of Parents / Carers

Parents and Carers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day
- Contact the school on the first day of any absence to inform them of their child's absence
- Not take family holidays during school term time
- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time
- Liaise with the school to notify them if there are any present issues, which maybe impacting on their child's attendance

The responsibility of the Attendance Improvement Officer

The Education Welfare Service has a responsibility to:

- Ensure that regular register checks are undertaken and to identify those students with emerging patterns of absence
- Meet regularly with the designated members of staff at the school, namely the Assistant Headteacher, Directors of Learning and Attendance Officer, to discuss those students whose levels of attendance are causing a concern. A baseline threshold of students with 90 % attendance and below will be used as a structure to discuss attendance concerns. The AIO will work in partnership with school staff to identify a plan of action for those students identified. This baseline will change to 92% in September 2015.
- Work in partnership with the school to evaluate and analyse the attendance data at the school, regarding the students on roll and work in partnership with school staff to undertake pieces of focus work where the need and requirement is identified and to discuss new cases as appropriate
- Work in partnership with students, parents and school staff to address any present issues, which may be preventing a student from attending school regularly. This may include supporting and reviewing a student's phased return to school.
- Undertake case work to support the school, Parents / Carers and students to promote education and regular attendance, and work towards achieving positive change where there are attendance concerns. This will include identifying individual targets, and working to specific time scales
- Work within the legal framework and instigate legal proceedings in the Magistrate Court, for those cases where there has been little or no improvement in the attendance
- Ensure that the legislation regarding Penalty Notices is used accurately and effectively when a student's unauthorised absence meets the Penalty Notice Warning letter criteria. This includes those students who have taken unauthorised holiday during term time.
- The school operates the truancy text system to follow up absence when the school have not been notified. It is a priority of the school to be pro-active in communicating attendance concerns to parents by phone, in writing, and in person during preventative meetings and parents evenings.
- Please see Form Tutor Hand book and note First Day of Absence Procedures / Student Planner; Parent / Student / School agreement regarding attendance.

Legislation & Local Authority Policy

- In cases where the school has tried to address attendance concerns without any improvement a referral will be made to the Education Welfare Service.
- The referral may lead to parents being sent a Penalty Notice warning letter, if the Local Authority criteria of fifteen unauthorised sessions of absence has been met during one academic term. Following this the school will monitor the students attendance for four weeks.
- A Penalty Notice will be issued, if following the four-week grace period the student has further unauthorised absences, during the subsequent monitoring period reaching twenty one absences. This is in accordance with The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003.

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- In addition, Penalty Notices can be issued where a family deliberately takes a holiday during term-time (of five school days or more), without permission from the school, and it can be demonstrated that the parent / carer understood that permission had not been granted.
- Alternatively, casework involvement from the Education Welfare Service may occur following a referral by the school. In cases where there is little or no improvement in the student's attendance, the Education Welfare Service will instigate legal proceedings in accordance with The Education Act 1996.

Rewards & Recognition

Sir Frederic Osborn School prides itself on using creative strategies and initiatives to promote the level of attendance, amongst the students on roll within the school community. These include the following:

- Certificates are awarded to students in recognition of improved and good attendance.
- The school recognises students with 100% Attendance and those with 100% Attendance over the last 2 weeks.
- Links are made between attendance and the "Doing the Right Thing" reward system in Key Stage 3
- Individual form groups who have good attendance are awarded with half-termly, termly and annual certificates to acknowledge and recognise their efforts.
- Notice boards, which are located around the school, are used as a means of displaying levels of attendance for each Form Group.
- Students who achieve good levels of attendance are awarded additional merits through the "Doing the Right Thing" rewards system.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation

The policy will be reviewed by the Governors Curriculum Committee within the policy review framework

Compiled by: SLT	Revision number: 5
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