

## **Oxton St Saviour's CE (Aided) Primary School**

### **Attendance Policy**

**Updated: September 2014**

For children at our school to gain the greatest benefit from education it is essential that they attend school regularly and punctually. They should only be absent from school when it is absolutely necessary.

School absence will disrupt a child's learning and may affect their academic progress. It may also disrupt their friendships and impact on their social and emotional development. Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

School attendance is given a high profile throughout the school because we know how important it is. It is discussed at school assemblies, parents' evenings, staff meetings and governors' meetings. It is also included in school reports and newsletters.

#### **Sickness**

If your child is sick or has a medical appointment it is important that you inform the school as soon as possible. Where possible, please make medical appointments during school closure times or late in the school day. Parents are also asked to send in a note to explain the reasons for any absence. If the sickness continues for more than a few days we would expect you to consult your doctor. If your child has ongoing health problems the school nurse may be able to help.

#### **Action Plans**

If a child's attendance becomes a source of concern school will write to the parent and they may be invited to a meeting with the Head Teacher. The meeting will give an opportunity to discuss any concerns and to agree an Action Plan or Parenting Contract to support the family.

#### **Persistent Absence**

If a child's attendance falls below 85% they will be defined by the Department of Education as Persistently Absent. At this level their progress and development may be significantly impaired. The case may be referred to the Education Social Worker who would contact the family and offer to visit them at home to address any concerns and offer support.

#### **Lateness**

Children need to be in school on time at 9:00am each day when the registration period begins. It's important that all children make a good start to the day and are ready to learn. If a child arrives after 9:00am but before

9:15am [when registers close] they will be given a late mark [L]. Children who arrive late are often embarrassed and may not be in the best frame of mind to begin learning. They may miss out on something important.

### **Parent's legal responsibilities**

The Education Act [1996] Section 444 requires parents to ensure that their children receive full-time education which suits their needs. Parents who fail in this duty may be prosecuted via the courts and fined up to £2 500 or, in some cases, imprisoned. The Anti Social Behaviour Act [2003] Section 23 also indicates parents may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice if their child's absence from school is unauthorised. Fixed Penalty Notices are for £60 if paid within 21 days and £120 if paid within 28 days.

### **Holidays in term time**

Parents are discouraged from withdrawing their children from school in term time for family holidays because this may impact on their progress. Head Teachers may only authorise holidays in term time in exceptional circumstances. Parents who believe their circumstances are exceptional are asked to write to the Head Teacher explaining their reasons to assist the Head Teacher's decision. Parents who withdraw their children for unauthorised holidays in term time may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice.

### **Further advice and guidance**

Further advice and guidance may be found on the Department of Education website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/behaviour/attendance>