



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Introduction:

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and so all children 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 parents/carers make sure that children attend regularly and this policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

The Law Relating to Attendance:

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
 - (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning: - 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 a child's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility.

Safeguarding:

Children may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:

- Attendance
- Behaviour management
- Health and safety
- Access to the curriculum
- Anti-bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter. Parents are strongly advised to inform the school of any known leave to be taken, regardless of authorisation. If school is not aware of the reason for an extended absence then welfare concerns will become paramount.

Aims:

The aims and objectives of the school's policy on attendance and punctuality are to enable maximum pupil attendance by encouraging parents to encourage their children to take full advantage of their educational opportunities by regular and punctual attendance at school and:

- a) To establish and sustain improved levels of attendance above 96%.
- b) To accurately record levels of unauthorised absence
- c) To ensure that policy and procedures on attendance and punctuality are effective and applied consistently in practice.
- d) To ensure that registers are completed accurately, consistently and reliably and that analysis of attendance data is used to provide an effective monitoring system and to inform practice and target resources.
- e) To identify pupils and groups of pupils whose absence or lateness is giving cause for concern and target resources to work toward the resolution of any difficulties being experienced.
- f) To reduce the percentage of persistent absentees (attendance below 90%).
- g) To promote an effective whole-school approach to the management of attendance where each member of the school community, including staff, governors, parents and pupils is aware of their roles and responsibilities and makes an effective contribution.
- h) To establish working partnerships with parents, support agencies and the wider community to address attendance issues.

Expectations:

Expectations of the School:

- Rewarding good attendance by class rewards and individual termly certificates.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance; registers will be completed at the beginning of each morning and afternoon sessions.
- Early and sensitive contact with parents on occasions when a pupil is absent and where no appropriate reason for absence has been provided.
- Early and sensitive action to be taken to resolve any problems/issues of which the school is notified.
- Excellent and improved levels of attendance on the part of relevant pupils will be rewarded by termly attendance certificates.
- Positive staff attitudes to pupils returning following absence will be promoted.
- Regular evaluation of attendance procedures and levels of attendance by Senior Leadership Team and the school's Governing Body.
- Clear message to be sent that if a pupil is absent, he/she will be missed, including first day calling. This is completed by administrative staff.
- If a child is taken ill during the school day, the parent will be notified and should then arrange to collect the child.

Expectations of Parents:

- To actively encourage their children to attend school on a regular basis.
- To contact the school whenever their child is unable to attend school, on each day of absence by 9.00 a.m. and confirm that initial contact in writing when the child returns to school.
- To ensure that children arrive at school in good time for registration, dressed appropriately, with appropriate equipment and well prepared for the school day.
- To positively engage with the school and inform appropriate member of staff of any

issue/problem which may hinder their child's regular attendance at school, including discipline and behaviour in school.

- Ensure that, unless absolutely necessary, any medical or dental appointments in respect of their child are made outside school hours but where such school-time appointments are made that evidence is provided to school staff. Parents should ensure that wherever possible, pupils return to school following such medical appointments.
- Parents are expected to co-operate with school staff and respond to calls and correspondence from the school in relation to the attendance of their child/ren.

Expectations of Pupils:

- That they will attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time for registration periods and lessons and be appropriately dressed and otherwise prepared for the school day.
- That they will inform a member of staff of any difficulty that may hinder their attendance at school.
- That their behaviour is such that it does not conflict with the day to day running of the school.
- That they will remain in school throughout the school day.

Roles and Responsibilities:

The School will operate a whole school policy for the management of attendance and in order that school procedures are efficiently and effectively implemented, the following members of staff will undertake the following responsibilities:

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher shall have overall responsibility for attendance at Oratory Primary School and be the attendance lead for attendance at the school, responsible for the day to day issues surrounding attendance and keeping the Governing Body informed of any key issues. The Head will meet the administrative officer to discuss attendance and liaise with class teachers regarding priority students in their class.

Class Teachers

Teachers are responsible for marking the attendance registers in accordance with the registration system and guidelines employed by the school

Admin Officers

Admin officers are responsible for bringing to the attention of Head any pupil that exhibits irregular attendance at school and/or is absent with no reason provided. First day contact is provided by admin officers, if no contact is received from parents/carers, we will make initial contact with parents and if a parent is unobtainable, we will leave a message requesting information. Administrative staff, and other members of staff each have a responsibility to inform the Head of any issues relating to school attendance and punctuality in respect of any pupil of whom they are aware or with whom they are working. If recording a reason for absence; date, time of call, who they are speaking to and the reason for absence will be immediately recorded on SIMS.

School Governors should:

- Monitor attendance levels, policy and procedures at the school.
- Place a standing item within the Head's Report at termly meetings of the Governing Body to continually review attendance. This policy will be reviewed on a biannual basis and governors will play an active part in the whole school community.

- Governors, in conjunction with the Head Teacher will help set realistic but challenging targets for improvements in school attendance.

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that individual pupils attend school regularly, and also to help schools in relation to the overall levels of absence and lateness:

- The LA will regularly collect and publish attendance data, and provide updated guidelines to schools.
- Attendance (statutory), Child Employment/Entertainment, Elective Home Education/ Children Missing Education (ACE) can make formal checks, recorded and dated, of all registers, to help identify areas of concern in relation to attendance registration.
- After the school has made contact with parents or carers and invited them into the school, but no significant improvement has resulted, if the pupil is still absent without a proper explanation, school staff can refer to Early Help services for support.
- If Early Help accepts the request they will work with the family to achieve an improved pattern of attendance and to address the issues which lie behind the non-attendance.

Understanding Types of Absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required in writing. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes agreed by the school. 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 using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Unauthorised absence includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time unless very exceptional circumstances are agreed.

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 sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to 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 usually makes things worse.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveler absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	Not counted in possible Attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year from the beginning of the academic year for whatever 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. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately.

Absence Procedures:

If a child is absent parents/carers must:

- Contact us as soon as possible (by 9.00 a.m.) on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day children return with an explanation of the absence
- Or, parents can call into school and report to reception. A member of staff will speak with you if available and a discussion is needed.

If a child is absent we will:

- Telephone on the day of absence if we have not heard from them
- Invite parents in to discuss the situation with the headteacher or deputy headteacher if absences persist;
- Refer the matter to the Local Authority if attendance reaches trigger points.

Tracking Absence:

- If an acceptable reason for absence is given and accepted by the school the absence may be marked as "authorised". The school are under no obligation to accept the reason given for absence when there is doubt as to its validity.
- The Head will keep under review all pupils whose attendance falls below 90% and keep under consideration reasons given for the absence. This will be reviewed along with the Local Authority who will advise as to whether the school should consider no longer authorising absence.
- If any child's attendance at the school falls below 90% and the absence is unauthorised, the Local Authority Early Help Service may be asked to intervene.
- Where a child is identified as post registration truancy and has no valid reason for leaving the school grounds he/she should be marked as unauthorised absence.
- The following three groups will be used for tracking on a termly basis:
Below 90%– persistent absentees
90-92.9% - cause for concern
93-94% - below average attendance

Registration:

- Teaching staff are required to mark the registers at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. This is a legal requirement.
- Individual members of staff are responsible for the security of the register/electronic folders used to mark the registers.
- The register is a legal document in the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Any removal of a child from the register must comply with Regulation 8.

Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the

day. Late arriving pupils are sometimes unsettled, may disrupt lessons and can be embarrassed about their lateness, encouraging future absence.

How we Manage Lateness:

The school day starts at **8.55 am** and we expect children to be in school at that time. Children who are not in school by that time will need to register at the office and will receive a late mark. The afternoon session starts at 1.20 p.m. in KS1 and EY and 1.35 p.m. in KS 2. At **9.30 am** the registers will be closed. In the afternoon this is 1.40 p.m. In accordance with the regulations, if a child arrives after that time they will receive a 'U' mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark. This may mean that parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

Every month a late report is produced by an admin officer and if a child has a persistent late record, parents will be contacted by letter. If no improvement is seen, parents will be asked to meet with a member of school staff to resolve the problem, but parents can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting their child to school on time.

Holidays in Term Time:

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and the law now discourages parents from taking children away in school time. Parents should remember that any savings they think they may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to their child's education.

There is **no** entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the government have amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as of September 2013 to reflect this. Therefore, Oratory Primary School can only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice or prosecution in the Magistrate's Court. If the school is aware of unauthorised holidays a 'G' code will be entered. If the reason for absence is unknown then a 'U' code will be entered as for other unauthorised absences.

Leave in Exceptional Circumstances:

Exceptional circumstances does not include normal family holidays. At Oratory Primary School any leave agreed is likely to be short and is entirely at the schools' discretion. Events that may be considered are for example;

- a close family funeral– one day normally granted.
- the marriage or re-marriage ceremony (not honeymoon) of a close relative – normally one to two days.
- graduation of a parent or older sibling only – one day normally granted.

Events that would not be considered as sufficient exceptional circumstances to authorise leave include but are not exhaustively;

- birthdays, anniversaries or associated celebrations for a child or family member. Celebrations can take place at a weekend.
- holiday plans resulting from restricted parental leave entitlement, separated family arrangements, transport issues/flight restrictions.
- domestic and childcare issues (e.g. installation work, deliveries, car failures, illness or appointments of family members).

Managing illness during the school day:

- If a pupil is unwell or has an accident and is considered unfit to continue in lessons parents will be informed for the pupil to be collected from reception.
- Pupils are not allowed to make their own way home, but must be collected by an appropriate adult.
- Parents will still be required to inform the school with regards to their child's absence where the absence goes beyond the session in which they were sent home.
- In exceptional circumstances emergency services may be contacted if there is any delay in the parents arrival at school or in the interests of the welfare of the child, when parents will be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances.
- If parents can prove medical appointments have been attended and the child returns during the session then an L and a note in the register can be used, rather than an authorised absence.

Education off the School Site:

- On occasions pupils may be involved in educational activities off the school site, such as sport, residential, field trips etc. If students fail to attend education off site it is still deemed as school attendance and the register will reflect whether any absence is authorised or not. The circumstances of this may be referred to the Education Investigation Officer where appropriate.

Rewards and Incentives:

- The school recognises the need to reward school attendance and a number of strategies are employed to achieve this to reflect:
 - a) Weekly Attendance
 - b) Termly Attendance
 - c) Annual Attendance
 - d) Punctuality

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and each child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The average level of attendance for this school last year was **96.2%**. This year's target is 97% and we will keep parents updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. We know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletter and we ask parents/carers for their full support.

Penalty Fines

Leave of absence – Under the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 a Headteacher MAY NOT authorise a leave of absence in term time for a holiday. A head teacher MAY (at his or her own discretion) authorise absence for exceptional circumstances. An application for a leave of absence must be made in writing to the school. If you take a leave of absence which **is not authorised** by the school **you may be issued with a fixed penalty fine** via the Local Authority.

Summary:

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. 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 and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Date of Policy: September 2019

Next Review: September 2021

Appendices – Absence Letters

1. Leave of absence refusal
2. Leave of absence granted
3. Late arrival
4. Persistent Late Arrival
5. No notification of reason of absence
6. Attendance below 94%
7. Attendance below 93%
8. Persistent absentee (90% attendance and below)

Appendix 1



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

I am in receipt of your request for leave of absence during term time and thank you for informing us of your intentions. Unfortunately I have been unable to authorise your request in line with the Education (Pupil Regulations) Regulations 2006 and 2013.

I respectfully remind you that should you proceed with the leave contrary to this decision, it will be recorded as unauthorised and could result in referral to the Local Authority. Referral to this team could result in sanctions such as a warning of Fixed Penalty Notice in the first instance.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher

Appendix 2



The
ORATORY
RC PRIMARY
School

Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

Thank you for your request for leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. This has been accepted and your child's absence will be authorised for (date/s).

Any additional days would remain unauthorised.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher

Appendix 3



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

Following routine monitoring of all students punctuality, it has been identified that your child has arrived late for school on more than **2** occasions, during the previous month. I would like to bring to your attention that when your child is late for school, they miss valuable learning time. Quite often a particular subject is affected, which can then result in the child falling behind. Late arriving children also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage further absence. Late arriving children are also often less settled and happy in school.

Good routines within the home are essential to assist children in establishing and maintaining punctuality, we rely on parents to assist their children in formulating routines and we would ask that should you be experiencing difficulty ensuring your child arrive at school on time, that you contact school on (020) 7589 5900 to arrange a meeting to discuss and resolve the difficulties.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher

Appendix 4



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

Following continued monitoring of all students punctuality, it has been identified that despite previous communication with you, your child's punctuality continues to pose a concern and disrupt their learning.

I would like to meet with you to discuss how the school can assist you and your childr/en in establishing and maintaining punctuality. Please contact school on (020) 7589 5900 to arrange a meeting.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

You will be aware that Oratory Primary School's attendance policy stipulates that parent/guardian should contact school **before** 9.00am on the first day of absence. Unfortunately your child's **recent absence** has been recorded as **unauthorised** on the school's register, as a result of no explanation being provided.

We require you to complete the form below and return to school at your very earliest convenience giving the reason for absence. We must have a reason within ten days of the absence. If not the absence will remain unauthorised. Please be aware that unless you provide valid medical evidence, any authorisation of absence remains at school's discretion.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher

Childs Name: -----

Class: -----

Date of absence: -----

Reason for absence: -----

Childs GP contacted: Yes / No

Parent Name: (Print) -----

Parent Name: (Signature) -----

Current Date: -----

Appendix 6



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

Following routine monitoring of all students attendance at school, it has been identified that your child's attendance is below 94%. This is below primary school targets and below average attendance at Oratory Primary School.

We accept that there may well be obvious reasons for absence, such as illness but we have a duty to inform you that your child's attendance is now below average. We hope that by bringing this to your attention you can support your child and the school to ensure your child gains the greatest benefit that they can from their education, by regular school attendance.

However, if needed, please feel free to contact school on (020) 75895900 to book an appointment so that you can discuss any issues or concerns you feel may be impacting on your child's ability to establish and maintain a regular attendance pattern.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher

Appendix 7



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

Your child's attendance is now **below 93%**. This is well below school's average attendance and is detrimental to your child's academic and social achievements. Should your child have further absences they should be accompanied by medical evidence to ensure authorisation. This can include a practitioner note, appointment card and/or labelled medication. This will remain in place until your child's attendance reaches 95% this academic year.

If attendance fails to improve, we will contact you again to arrange a meeting and may have to refer the matter to the Early Help Service at the Local Authority, who will contact you at home to discuss your child's school attendance.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher

Appendix 8



Oratory Primary School
Bury Walk
Cale Street
Chelsea
SW3 6QH
020 7589 5900

Date:

Dear

Re:

You will be aware that we have contacted you previously to inform you of school's concerns in respect of your child's absence from school.

Your child's attendance at school has deteriorated further and they are currently only achieving -----% attendance. As a result of this, your child has now moved into the **persistent absentee** bracket (90% and below).

Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to your child's education and will seriously affect their learning. Brook Primary School is committed to ensuring your child achieves their full potential and recognises that this can only be accomplished with your assistance and your child's full attendance at school.

Whilst any child may be absent from school due to illness, we recognise that sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school for a variety of reasons. We wish to support you and assist your child in establishing a regular attendance pattern at school and would ask that you contact me to arrange a mutually convenient meeting to discuss any barriers to your child's school attendance. Please be aware that should you fail to contact me and your child's attendance deteriorates further, we will pass the case to the Local Authority's Early Help Service.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Griffiths
Headteacher