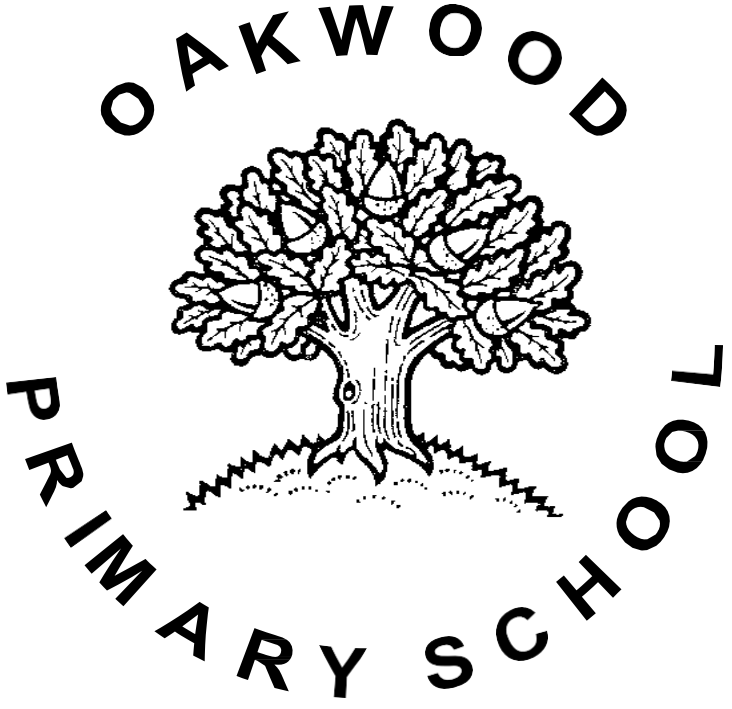


Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Date agreed by Governors: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

Aims

Our Attendance and Punctuality Policy encompasses our school values: **kindness, curiosity and ambition.**

We have the **ambition** for all children to attain the highest possible levels of attendance so that they can maximise their learning opportunities. In order to do this, we demonstrate **curiosity** with regards to pupil's attendance and punctuality as is our statutory duty. However, we recognise and show **kindness** to individual circumstances through our supportive approach.

Oakwood Primary School recognises that good attendance is essential in order for pupils to get the most from their school experience, including their attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances.

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at the school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly and on time. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities. It is called "Working together to improve school attendance" and it includes a National Framework in relation to absence and the use of legal sanctions. Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance.

This policy is written with the above guidance in mind and underpins the following aims:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- ensure every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled.
- ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school.
- ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities at school, and when they leave school.

It seeks to ensure that all parties involved in the practicalities of school attendance are aware and informed of attendance matters in school and to outline the school's commitment to attendance being everyone's responsibility. It details the responsibilities of individuals and groups involved and the procedures in place to promote and monitor pupil attendance.

In addition, Oakwood Primary School follows the DfE's statutory safeguarding guidance (Keeping Children Safe in Education) and our own Child Protection Policy which emphasises the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing or absent from education.

Our policy, school staff and school environment aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- Promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued.
- Raising and maintaining a whole school awareness of the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

- Ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend school regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Promoting Regular Attendance

At Oakwood School, our ambition is for every child to have attendance of 97% or higher as regular attendance gives children the best possible chances for success in school. Attendance of 95% or below will be a cause for concern, and may require additional support.

At Oakwood Primary School, we believe in developing good patterns of attendance and set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality for all our pupils from the day they join our community. It is a central part of our school's vision, values, ethos and day to day life. We recognise the strong connections between attendance, attainment, safeguarding and wellbeing.

To promote good attendance, we offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos will demonstrate that pupils' presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up support will be offered.

The school Attendance Lead is the Deputy Headteacher, Mr Stanway. He works with other school staff to regularly monitor whole school attendance and ensure the implementation of this policy under the direction of the school's Headteacher, Mrs Thompson.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is the responsibility of parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this, we will:

- Submit a daily attendance return to the Department of Education, in line with the legal expectations placed on all schools.
- Build strong relationships and work jointly with families.
- Promote the benefits of high attendance.
- Accurately complete admission and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence as required by law.
- Celebrate excellent attendance by displaying and reporting class achievements. E.g. through our Golden Clock awarded in Celebration Assembly.
- Celebrate good or improving attendance.
- Report to parents/carers regularly on their child's attendance and the impact on their progress.
- Monitor attendance trends half-termly
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
    - Families will receive communication if attendance falls below 93.5% for any reason during half termly monitoring processes.

Understanding Types of Absence

Any absence affects the routine of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously impact their learning journey and ability to progress. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and allowing absence from school, without a good reason, creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parent), as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Each half-day is known as a 'session'.

Authorised absences are morning or afternoon sessions away from school for a genuine reason such as illness (although you may be asked to provide medical evidence for your child before this can be authorised), medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes. Oakwood Primary School strongly advises medical and dental appointments to be made outside of school hours where feasible.

Examples where the school may consider authorising absences are:

- The absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observances by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong
- There is a close family bereavement

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been granted. This type of absence may lead to the school referring to the Local Authority for penalty notices and/or legal proceedings.

Unauthorised absence includes (however this list is not exhaustive):

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily e.g. because they had a late night or for non-infectious illness or injury that would not affect their ability to learn.
- absences which have never been properly explained.
- children who arrive at school after the close of registration are marked using a 'U'. This indicates that they are in school for safeguarding purposes, however, is counted as an absence for the session.
- shopping trips.
- looking after other children or children accompanying siblings or parents to medical appointments.
- their own or family birthdays.
- holidays taken during term time, not deemed 'for exceptional purposes' by the headteacher or Attendance Lead, including any arranged by other family members or friends.
- day trips.
- other leave of absence in term time which has not been agreed.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA) and Severe Absenteeism (SA)

A pupil is defined by the Government as a **'persistent absentee'** when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this. All pupils who have attendance levels of 90% or below are considered to be a persistent absentee.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent'**. Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face wider barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to require more intensive support.

Absence Procedures

Oakwood Primary School staff monitor and review all pupils' absence, and the reasons that are given, thoroughly.

If a child is absent from school the parent must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school via telephone or email absence@oakwood.herts.sch.uk before 8:55am on the day of absence
- Contact the school on every further day of absence, again before 8:55am
- For absences lasting more than 3 days in length, provide a written explanation of the absence (email is sufficient) for the purposes of monitoring absence
- Ensure that your child returns to school as soon as possible and you provide any medical evidence, if requested, to support the absence. Medical evidence may be requested *(where school have reasonable doubt as to the authenticity of the absences)* where your child is having multiple periods of absence which are reported as being due to medical reasons. When determining whether a child is too ill to attend school, both parents and school staff can consider the advice contained within the NHS Guidance on School Absence and Childhood Illness see Appendix D

If your child is absent, we will:

- Telephone or text you on the first, and every subsequent day of absence, if we have not heard from you. However, it remains the responsibility of parents and/or carers to contact the school.
- If we are unable to make contact with parents by telephone, we will telephone emergency contact numbers, send letters home and a home visit may be made, in the interests of safeguarding
- The Local Authority will be informed if no contact has been made with parent/carers by the 10th day of absence (or sooner if deemed appropriate) as The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 Section 13 requires schools to inform the local authority of any pupils absent from school and where absences amount to 10 or more **days**, either consecutively or irregularly and have been unauthorised. This means school will have unauthorised 20 am/pm sessions of absences. Schools are also under a safeguarding duty, under **section 175 of the Education Act 2002** to investigate any unexplained/unauthorised absences. At this point your child will be considered to be "absent from education"

If absence continues, we will:

- Write to you if your child's attendance is below 93.5% and/or where punctuality is a concern
- Arrange a meeting so that you may discuss the situation with our Attendance Lead
- Consider and offer reasonable adjustments.
- Offer a Families First Assessment to ensure appropriate support is considered.
- Create a personalised robust support plan, such as an attendance contract, to address any barriers to attendance and make clear each person's role in improving the attendance patterns of your child.
- Offer signposting support to other agencies or services, if appropriate.
- Seek advice, guidance and support from the Local Authority Statutory Attendance Support Team and consider appropriate legal sanctions, if attendance deteriorates following the above actions.

Absence data

- We use data to monitor, identify and support individual pupils or groups of pupils when their attendance needs to improve, and schools are required to submit pupil attendance data to the Department for Education on a daily basis Education (Information about Individual Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2024. Persistently and severely absent pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. We also combine this with academic tracking, as increased absence affects attainment.
- We share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners, when absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe.
- We analyse data on both an individual and cohort level. This includes monitoring attendance patterns in different cohort groups such as classes, year groups and pupil groups (SEND and Pupil Premium for example).

Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable and can lead to irregular school attendance patterns. Good timekeeping is a vital life skill which will help children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

Pupils who arrive late may disrupt lessons and, if a child misses the start of the day, they can feel unsettled and embarrassed and risk missing vital work and important messages from their class teacher.

The times of the start and close of the school day for all pupils at Oakwood Primary School are:

Classroom doors open: 8:45am

Registration starts: 8.45am

Registration closes: 8:55am

End of the school day:

EYFS – 3:05pm

KS1 – 3:10pm

KS2 – 3:15pm

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 8:45am when children can begin to enter the school building;
- Registers are taken at 8:55am;
- Children arriving after 8.55am are required to come into school via the school office accompanied by a parent/carer (compulsory for years R to 4). The parent or child must provide a reason for lateness which the admin team will record on our electronic system.
- At 9:15am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Government Regulations, if your child arrives after that time, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site for safeguarding purposes – 'U', but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean that they have an unauthorised absence;
- The school may contact parents/carers regarding punctuality concerns.

If your child has a persistent lateness record, you may be asked to meet with the Attendance Lead, but you can approach us at any time if you are having difficulties getting your child to school on time. We expect parents and staff to encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and, as a school, we celebrate good class and individual punctuality. Unauthorised lateness could result in the school seeking advice and guidance from the Local Authority.

Understanding barriers to attendance

Whilst any child may occasionally have time off school because they are too unwell to attend, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any barriers preventing regular attendance are best resolved between the school, the parents, and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, which may be linked to Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), then we will work with that family to understand the root problem and provide any necessary support. We can consider a Families First Assessment, use outside agencies to help with this, such as the School Nurse, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing support services, a Family Support Worker, or the relevant Local Authority team/s. Where outside agencies are supporting the family, you may be invited to attend a Team Around the Family meeting (TAF) to consider what is working well and what needs to improve. An individual support plan will be agreed and subsequently reviewed.

Some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers. These can include pupils who suffer from long-term medical conditions or who have special educational needs and disabilities, or other vulnerabilities. High expectations of attendance remain in place for these pupils; however, we will work with families and pupils to support improved attendance whilst being mindful of the additional barriers faced. We can discuss reasonable adjustments and additional support from external partners, where appropriate.

Examples of how the school may support children with SEND or experiencing EBSA are:

- a daily 'check-in' with a key member of staff
- a SEND Support Plan
- an earlier start to the school day with the pastoral team
- weekly 1:1 pastoral session

In exceptional circumstances this may include:

- a temporary part-time timetable
- a flexi-schooling arrangement

Local Authority Attendance Support Team

Oakwood Primary School maintains a working relationship with Local Authority Attendance Support Specialists who work strategically by offering support to schools, to reduce persistent absence and improve overall attendance.

Parents/Carers are expected to work with the school and local authority to address any attendance concerns. Parent/Carers should proactively engage with the support offered, aiming to resolve any problems together. If difficulties cannot be resolved in this way, the school may consider more formal support and/or refer the child to the Local Authority. If attendance does not improve, legal action may be taken which may be in the form of a Penalty Notice (see Appendix C for the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct) or other legal options available to the Local Authority such as prosecution in the Magistrates Court.

Under the DfE's statutory guidance, schools are required to submit a sickness return to the Local Authority for all pupils who have missed/are likely to miss 15 or more school days (consecutive or cumulative) due to medical reasons/illness. Schools must also submit information to the Local Authority where a pupil has been/ or is likely to be marked as unauthorised absent for 10 or more days (consecutively or irregularly) across the school year.

See Appendix A for DfE summary tables of responsibilities for school attendance.

School Attendance and the Law

In 2024, The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 legislation introduced a National Framework in England. By law all children of compulsory school age must receive an appropriate full-time education (Education Act 1996). Parent/Carers have a legal duty to ensure their child attends school regularly at the school at which they are registered.

Parent/Carers may be recognised differently under education law, than under family law. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 states that a 'parent', in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a parent (from which can be inferred 'biological parent') but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child.

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part time and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

National Framework for Penalty Notices

Oakwood Primary School is beholden to a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England. The threshold is unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice for £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days (for the first offence). A second Penalty Notice issued within a three-year

period will result in a fine of £160 per parent, per child. If a third offence is committed the matter may be referred to the local authority for consideration of prosecution via the Magistrates Court. If prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, each parent/carer may receive a fine of up to £2500 and/or up to 3 months in prison. If a parent/carer is found guilty in court, they will receive a criminal conviction.

See Appendix B for the Hertfordshire Code of Conduct.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 set out the statutory requirements for schools. All references to family holidays and extended leave have been removed. **The amendments specify that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are "exceptional circumstances" and they do not have any discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence each academic year**.

Oakwood Primary School shall not grant leave of absence in term time unless there are reasons considered to be exceptional by the headteacher or staff member to whom the authority is delegated (Attendance Lead), irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the headteacher or his/her designate (not the local authority) may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing, email is sufficient, in advance.
The school will usually consider that the parent who has made the application is therefore allowing the leave of absence, and that all parents who are on the holiday are allowing the leave. Where a parent removes a child after their application for leave was refused or where no application was made to the school, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Oakwood Primary School may request penalty notices, in line with the National Framework and Hertfordshire Code of Conduct, in respect of each parent believed to have allowed the absence.

Exceptional circumstances:

At Oakwood Primary School, the fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time, regardless of who has planned or paid for the holiday or absence (including grandparents or other family or friends).

The headteacher/school may discuss the leave of absence request with other education settings and/or the Local Authority to determine any exceptional circumstances.

If leave of absence is authorised or unauthorised, the school will not provide work for children to do during their absence. Parent/Carers are however advised to read with their children and encourage them to write a diary while they are away.

Deletion from Roll

For any pupil leaving Oakwood Primary School*,* other than at the end of year 6*,* parents/carers are required to inform the school office in writing of their intention to remove the pupil from roll. Parents should, where possible, provide the school with the following information: Child's name, class, current address, date of leaving, new home address (if applicable), name of new school, address of new school. This information is essential to ensure that we know the whereabouts and may appropriately safeguard all our pupils, even those who leave us.

It is crucial that parent/carers keep school updated with current addresses and contact details for the pupil and key family members, in case of emergency.

Under Pupil Regulations 2006, all schools are **legally required** to notify their Local Authority of **every new entry** to the admission register **within five days** of the pupil being enrolled. In addition to this, **every deletion** from the school register must also be notified to the Local Authority, as soon as the ground for deletion has been met in relation to that pupil, and in any event no later than the time at which the pupil's name is deleted from the register. This duty does not apply when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register at a standard transition point – when the pupil has completed the final year of education normally provided by that school.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body:

It is the role of the governing body at Oakwood to:

- Ensure effective policies and procedures are in place
- Ensure policies comply with legislation and statutory guidance
- Monitor attendance data on a regular basis throughout the school year
- Review attendance data, trends and vulnerable groups
- Question and challenge school leaders regarding attendance figures
- Ensure leaders provide adequate staff training and resources.

Headteacher:

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher at Oakwood to:

- Ensure an effective policy is implemented
- Establish a culture where attendance is the responsibility of all school staff
- Ensure safeguarding and attendance procedures are linked
- Work collaboratively with governors and the Local Authority on matters pertaining to attendance
- Delegate attendance responsibilities to an appropriate senior leader
- Allocate sufficient resources to work pertaining to attendance.

Attendance Lead:

The Attendance Lead at Oakwood is Mr Stanway, Deputy Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the Attendance Lead at Oakwood to:

- Write, review and embed the school attendance policy
- Ensure statutory attendance procedures and policies are implemented
- Monitor attendance data and analyse information for patterns and areas of concern
- Ensure accurate records of attendance are maintained
- Track persistent and severe absentees
- Communicate with parents where there are attendance-related concerns
- Ensure staff training and awareness of attendance matters
- Lead attendance meetings with other Oakwood staff
- Support Oakwood staff to identify attendance concerns
- Liaise with Governors, the Local Authority and external agencies in relation to attendance matters.

Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants:

It is the responsibility of class teachers and teaching assistants at Oakwood to:

- Adhere to the agreed Attendance Policy at the school
- Build strong relationships and maintain a positive classroom environment where pupils feel safe, welcomed and valued
- Monitor attendance for children in their class and raise any concerns with the Attendance Lead and/or Safeguarding Lead
- Recognise and identify early warning signs children may exhibit with their attendance
- Promote the importance of good attendance through everyday interactions
- Support reintegration of children who have been absent.

Parents and carers:

It is the responsibility of parents and carers of children at Oakwood to:

- Ensure their child/children attend school on time everyday
- Notify the school of any absence, providing a reason for that absence
- Work in partnership with the school to address attendance concerns
- Attend meetings where necessary to address attendance concerns
- Avoid booking holidays or other events in term time
- Promote positive attitudes regarding school attendance to their child/children
- Inform the school of any developing barriers to school attendance such as medical concerns, emotional concerns, safeguarding concerns and family issues.

Pupils:

It is the responsibility of pupils at Oakwood to:

- Attend school every day unless they are genuinely unable to do so
- Arrive on time prepared to learn
- Engage positively with school life
- Discuss any concerns or barriers to attendance with trusted adults
- Follow agreed support plans for attendance where difficulties exist.

Appendix A: DfE guidance Summary table of responsibilities for school attendance. From 19th August 2024

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65e8ae343649a2001aed63aa/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance applies_from_19_August_2024_.pdf

All pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies. Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has to be unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness). Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance. Book any medical appointments around the school day where possible.	Have a clear school attendance policy on the school website which all staff, pupils and parents understand. Develop and maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance. Accurately complete admission and attendance registers. Have robust daily processes to follow up absence. Regularly monitor data to identify patterns and trends and understand which pupils and pupil cohorts to focus on. Have a dedicated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.	Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their school(s) to prioritise attendance, and work together with leaders to set whole school cultures. Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties. Use data to understand patterns of attendance, compare with other local schools, identify areas of progress and where greater focus is needed. Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.	Have a strategic approach to improving attendance for the whole area and make it a key focus of all frontline council services. Have a School Attendance Support Team that works with all schools in their area to remove area-wide barriers to attendance. Provide each school with a named point of contact in the School Attendance Support Team who can support with queries and advice. Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.

Pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support.	Proactively use data to identify pupils at risk of persistent absence. Work with each identified pupil and their parents to understand and address the reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance. Where out of school barriers are identified, signpost and support access to any required services in the first instance and act as lead practitioner if attendance is the only issue and/or the local threshold for formal early help is not met. If the issue persists, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the local authority and other partners. If a case meets the local threshold for formal early help/family support, this includes conducting the early help assessment and acting as the lead practitioner where all partners agree that the school is the best placed lead service. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the school, continue to work with the local authority and partners.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Hold a regular conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so. Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to services they need in the first instance. If the issue persists, and there are multiple needs consider whether the threshold for early help is met and facilitate access where it is. Regardless, take an active part in the multi-agency effort with the school and other partners. Provide the lead practitioner in cases where threshold is met and all partners agree that a local authority service is best placed to lead. Where the lead practitioner is outside of the local authority, continue to work with the school and partners.

Persistently absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Where absence becomes persistent, put additional targeted support in place to remove any barriers. Where necessary this includes working with partners. Where there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations with parents and be clear about the potential need for legal intervention in future. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, work with the local authority on legal intervention. Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through a referral to statutory children's social care. Work with other schools in the local area, such as schools previously attended and the schools of any siblings.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continue support as for pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent and: Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options including attendance contracts and education supervision orders. Where there are safeguarding concerns, ensure joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where support is not working, being engaged with or appropriate, enforce attendance through legal intervention (including prosecution as a last resort).

Severely absent pupils

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the formal support offered – including any parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: Agree a joint approach for all severely absent pupils with the local authority.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Continue support as for persistently absent pupils and: All services should make this group the top priority for support. This may include a whole family plan, consideration for an education, health and care plan, or alternative form of educational provision. Be especially conscious of any potential safeguarding issues, ensuring joint working between the school, children's social care services and other statutory safeguarding partners. Where appropriate, this could include conducting a full children's social care assessment and building attendance into children in need and child protection plans.

Support for cohorts of pupils with lower attendance than their peers

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Not applicable.	Proactively use data to identify cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance and develop strategies to support them. Work with other schools in the local area and the local authority to share effective practice where there are common barriers to attendance.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.

Support for pupils with medical conditions or SEND with poor attendance

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Maintain the same ambition for attendance and work with pupils and parents to maximise attendance. Ensure join up with pastoral support and where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed. Consider additional support from wider services and external partners, making timely referrals. Regularly monitor data for such groups, including at board and governing body meetings and with local authorities.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Work closely with relevant services and partners, for example special educational needs, educational psychologists, and mental health services, to ensure joined up support for families. Ensure suitable education, such as alternative provision, is arranged for children of compulsory school age who because of health reasons would not otherwise receive a suitable education.

Support for pupils with a social worker

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand their child's barriers to attendance. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Know who the pupils who have, or who have had, a social worker are. Understand how the welfare, safeguarding, and child protection issues that they are experiencing, or have experienced, can have an impact on attendance – whilst maintaining a culture of high aspiration for the cohort. Provide additional academic support and make reasonable adjustments to help them, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there can be a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes. Work in partnership with the local authority at a strategic and individual level, sharing data on attendance including, at an individual level, informing the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.	Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.	Ensure that all Children's Social Care practitioners, understand the importance of good attendance for pupil's educational progress, for their welfare and their wider development – and understand their role in improving it. Through the work of Virtual School Heads, they should: • Undertake systemic monitoring and data sharing of the attendance of children with a social worker in their area: developing and implementing targeted cohort level interventions to improve attendance. • Provide advice, challenge and training to schools on how to promote and secure good attendance for children with a social worker. • Develop whole system approaches, with social care, to support the attendance of children in need.

Looked after and previously looked after children

Parents are expected to:	Schools are expected to:	Academy trustees and governing bodies are expected to:	Local authorities are expected to:
Work with the school and local authority to help them understand the child's barriers to attendance – including the development of Personal Education Plans. Proactively engage with the support offered.	Have high expectations for the cohort – with expert support and leadership provided by the designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Work in partnership with the local authority Virtual School Head to develop and deliver high quality Personal Education Plans for looked-after children that support good attendance. Work directly with parents to develop good home-school links that support good attendance. For previously looked-after pupils this could include discussion on use of the Pupil Premium Plus funding managed by the school.	Designate a member of staff to have responsibility for the promotion of the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after pupils. Monitor and review attendance of the cohort and consider how school policies, including behaviour policies, are sensitive to their needs and support good attendance.	Promote the educational achievement of looked-after and previously looked-after children – doing everything possible to minimise disruption to education when a pupil enters care. (LA that looks after the child:) Appoint an expert Virtual School Head (VSH) – will: • Monitor, report on, and evaluate the education outcomes of looked after children, including their attendance, as if they attended a single school- whenever they live or are educated. • Ensure schools know when they have a pupil looked after by the authority on their role and that information is shared with the school on issues that may impact on their attendance. • Ensure that all looked-after pupils have high quality, up to date, effective Personal Education Plans developed in partnership with schools, social workers and carers – including, where necessary, clear interventions and use of pupil premium plus funding to support good attendance. • Provide expert advice and information on the education of previously looked-after pupils to schools and parents – including their attendance.

Monitoring

Parents:	Schools:	Academy trustees and governing bodies:	Local authorities:
Schools regularly update parents on their child's attendance. (If parents feel the school and or local authority have not not delivered what they are expected to they should discuss the case with the school and/or local authority's attendance support team.)	The school's Senior Attendance Champion will ensure all school based staff complete their attendance responsibilities in line with the school's policies and procedures. The governing board or academy trust will hold the headteacher or executive leadership to account for their delegated responsibilities and for compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. They will review progress and provide challenge when required. The board will help school leaders focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or cohorts who need it most and ensure that school staff receive adequate training on attendance. Ofsted will expect schools to do all they reasonably can to achieve the highest possible attendance as part of the behaviour and attitudes judgement. This includes, where attendance is not consistently at or above what could reasonably be expected, that schools have a strong understanding of the causes of absence (particularly for persistent and severe absence) and a clear strategy in place that takes account of those causes to improve attendance for all pupils. Ultimately, in cases where a school has not met expectations or statutory duties the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.	DfE Regions Group considers multi academy trusts' efforts on attendance as part of decision making. Ofsted considers governing bodies' efforts as part of inspections.	DfE Regions Group monitors local authority efforts as part of regular interaction. Ofsted may consider the local area partnership's approach to improving attendance of children and young people with SEND as part of the SEND Area Inspection, and the local authority's approach to improving attendance for children with a social worker through inspecting local authority children's services. Ultimately, in cases where a local authority has not met expectations or statutory duties the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman or the Secretary of State can consider a complaint.

Appendix B – Attendance Codes

The school is legally required to follow the codes in the table below. The codes below are a selection of the most commonly used codes Oakwood are required to use. A full list of codes can be found here.

/	Present for the morning session
****	Present for the afternoon session
L	Late arrival before registers have closed
U	Late after registers have closed.
M	Authorised absence for medical appointment/reasons
I	Authorised absence for illness
R	Authorised absence to observe recognised religious days
G	Unauthorised absence for a holiday
O	Unauthorised absence for other or unknown reasons
#	Planned whole school closure

Appendix C - HERTFORDSHIRE CODE OF CONDUCT: PENALTY NOTICES FOR PARENTS OF TRUANTS AND PARENTS OF PUPILS EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR ACT 2003 SECTION 23 Hertfordshire Code of Conduct: Penalty Notices for Parents of Truants and Behaviour of Pupils Excluded from School Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003

Penalty notices for unauthorised absence | Hertfordshire County Council

Appendix D – Illness Absence Guidance links

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/626669cb8fa8f523b7221b98/UKHSA-should-I-keep-my_child_off_school_guidance-A3-poster.pdf

DfE external document template (childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

Wellbeing: national resources - Hertfordshire Grid for Learning (thegrid.org.uk)

Illness and your child's education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Is my child too ill for school? - NHS (www.nhs.uk)