

Attendance and Punctuality Guide for Parents

Outwood Academy Shafton



January 2025

The greater the attendance, the greater the achievement

- Parents/carers are supported, with a focus on positive and proactive solutions, to **encourage excellent attendance**.
- Excellent attendance requires a **three-way partnership** between students, parents/carers and our school.
- Achievement of students is **directly linked** to attendance.
- **Encouraging regular school attendance is one of the most powerful ways we can prepare our students for success, both in school and in life.**

What does good attendance mean?

- **Example:** A student in Year 7 has **90% attendance**. The student thinks this is pretty good. However, it is not!!
- This is because:
 - **90% attendance** is the equivalent of **½ a day** missed every week of the school year.
 - **90% attendance** over the school year would have students miss out on **19 days of learning**.
 - This is **95 lessons missed** over the school year. It is **almost impossible to catch up** on the missed learning from 95 lessons.

Percentages of attendance over a Full Year:

	Attendance	No. of days off (in a year)	Number of lessons missed (in a year)
Excellent	100%	0 days off	0 lessons missed
Good	97%	6 days off	30 lessons missed
Needs Improvements	94%	12 days off	60 lessons missed
Needs Improvement	90%	19 days off	95 lessons missed
Concerns	85%	29 days off	145 lessons missed
Serious concerns	80% or below	38 days off	190 lessons missed

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- Schools are **legally required** to take two registers – one in the morning and one in the afternoon. At Outwood Academy Shafton, we take our morning register at **8:25am**, and our afternoon register at **12:00pm**.
- Persistent absence is defined as attendance which is **90% or less**.
- Research has shown that **achievement** is directly linked to attendance. Students with a **high level of attendance** perform **better** in **class** and in **examinations**.
 - A student's attendance can **affect the number of GCSEs** they will pass at **Grade 4** or above. Employers expect students to have a minimum of **Grade 4 in English & Maths**.
 - Students with over **90% attendance** are more likely to gain **5 or more GCSE** or equivalent qualifications.
- If your child has **not attended school**, and we have been unable to make contact with you, we may have to carry out a **home visit** to check they are safe and well, and to see if there is any support we can offer.

How can parents/carers support attendance?

- **Talk** to your child about school.
- Take a **positive interest** in your child's attendance and work, including homework.
- Attend **parent/carer consultation evenings**, forums and other school events.
- Arrange **appointments outside of school time** or consider only early morning or late afternoon appointments if not possible, ensuring your child attends school either side of the appointment.

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- Take holidays only during the **school holiday** period. The new National Framework for Penalty Notices came into effect in August 2024

Per parent, per child

Penalty Notices Fines will now be issued to **each parent, for each child** that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

5 consecutive days of term time leave

Penalty Notice Fines will be issued for term time leave of 5 or more consecutive days. Inset training days are school days and can be included in the 5 or more consecutive days where there was intent to be absent for term time leave.

10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10-week period

Penalty Notice Fines will be considered when there has been 10 sessions of unauthorised absences in a 10-week period.

First offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.

Second offence (within 3 years)

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term time leave or irregular attendance the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Third offence and any further offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for term time leave or irregular attendance a Penalty Notice will not be issued, and the case will be presented straight to Magistrates Court. Magistrates' fines can be up to **£2500 per parent, per child**.

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court can show on the parent's future DBS certificate, due to failure to safeguard a child's education.

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- Inform the **school's attendance team** immediately on the first day of absence, and any subsequent days.
- After **recovering from illness**, please make sure your child makes a prompt return to school, encouraging resilience.
- Provide **medical documentation** for periods of illness / appointments.

What should I do if I'm worried about attendance?

- Contact the **school's attendance team** to discuss your concerns:
 - **Education Welfare Officer/Attendance Manager** Ms Swift
 - **Education Welfare Officer/Attendance Manager** Miss Wooller
 - **Education Welfare Officer/Attendance Manager** Miss Edwards
 - **Attendance Assistant** Mrs Ravenhill
- We will set up a meeting to discuss any issues, as sensitively and positively as possible.
- If you want **external support** with your **child's attendance**, you can also write to:
Education Welfare Service, PO Box 634, Barnsley, S70 9GG or email:
admin-educationwelfareservice@barnsley.gov.uk

Punctuality

- If a child is late but the register is still **open** they will be marked as **late**.
- If the register has already **closed** when a child arrives, it may be classed as **unauthorised absence** ("U").
- Arriving late to school **every day by 5 minutes** adds up to over **3 full days** lost per school year.
- If students are **late**, they will serve a **C4a (30 minute detention)**

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How the Academy will respond to absence

- If a student is absent at morning registration without contact from a parent/carer to explain the absence, the Academy will contact parents/carers. We take our safeguarding responsibilities seriously and will always do our best to contact parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of their child's absence. Contact will be via automated message which will text mobile numbers for contacts with parental responsibility. Parents/carers are able to reply to the text message with a reason for their child's absence.
- If no response is received to the automated service, the Academy may telephone, or in some cases, make a home visit to parents/carers to fulfil our legal duty to establish the whereabouts of their child. Unexplained absences may be followed up by text, letter or email.
- Following an explanation from parents/carers regarding a student's absence, the Academy will decide whether or not this can be authorised in line with guidance from the Department for Education.
- An absence which hasn't been explained will remain as unauthorised.
- Attendance data will be used to identify patterns of poor attendance and shared with parents/carers on a regular basis to ensure we can work together to resolve any issues.
- We will work together with pupils and parents to understand barriers to attendance and look at how we work together to resolve this. Contact and support may be by any or all of the following: telephone, letter, meeting in school, home visit, formal attendance monitoring, involvement of the Local Authority.
- Where voluntary support isn't working or being engaged with, the academy staff and external partners will work with parents/carers to explain the consequences and ensure support is in place to enable families to respond.