

Tuesday, 26 April 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

### **Attendance and Punctuality**

At Osbalwick Primary Academy, we place great importance on helping all children form excellent habits in relation to daily attendance and punctuality. We believe that by helping children from a young age develop consistent daily routines sets them up well for future life and gives them the best chance of accessing a full and rich educational entitlement. In addition, OFSTED and the Government demand that schools closely monitor daily attendance and intervene early if any patterns of absence are beginning to form.

**Parents and carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children attend school every day and arrive on time.**

Our Attendance Policy procedures outline what to do if, for any reason, your child is to be late into school or is unable to attend. These procedures also sit alongside our Safeguarding Policy as it is vital that we know where a child is, on any given day, if they are not in school.

### **Covid Guidance**

The Guidance issued by the Department for Education in September 2021 clearly states school attendance is mandatory.

The expectation is that if a parent or carer has Covid, the child must still attend school daily. Children should still attend school if a parent or carer has Covid or if there are cases within their class. A child should only not attend school if they become unwell themselves with Covid or are awaiting the results of a PCR test in response to showing symptoms of Covid.

We will, of course, respond rapidly to any new local or national guidance when necessary.

In order for children to continue to recover from the disruption that has been caused to education over the last 2 academic years, it is vital that your child attends school each day.

### **Punctuality and Lateness**

Your child's prompt arrival at school in the morning is a very important factor in ensuring your child is "ready to learn". A late start can be unsettling for a child - they may miss learning instructions and may also feel embarrassed by walking into an already quiet, settled classroom. This late start could affect your child for the rest of the day - socially, emotionally and academically.

We request that your child arrives at 8.45am each morning. We ask that you work closely with your child to give them as calm a start to their day as possible. We also ask you to speak to their teacher if you are noticing that your child is finding coming to school difficult

for any reason. We are happy to support children and families and early intervention is key in minimising the escalation of any concerns you or your child may have.

Arrivals into school after 8.45am should be via the main front door where a member of the Admin Team will greet you and your child, take their dinner order and ensure they go to their classroom. Please note that any arrival after 8.45m will be classed as a late arrival. The number of late arrivals are also analysed at the end of each half term along with the absence rates.

### **Half-termly Reviews and Persistent Absence**

Each half term we review our attendance and punctuality figures and an Attendance Target is set by the Trust, in line with the National Attendance Rate. If your child's attendance, for any reason, falls below the Trust target, we have a duty to inform parents and carers - this is a Government expectation. We will write to parents and carers of children whose attendance is causing concern. The letter sent will depend on the amount of absence in relation to the set target and the actions needed to improve.

We appreciate that there may be genuine reasons, such as illness, when your child cannot attend school. This absence and punctuality tracking system will ensure that there is an understanding where absence is unavoidable.

We do ask that you encourage your child to come to school every day, even if they are feeling a little "under the weather" or tired. Please encourage them to be resilient and build positive attitudes for their short and long term futures.

Where the level of absence is becoming detrimental to your child's education or well-being, we will work in close partnership with parents and carers to implement an Action Plan to ensure rapid improvement.

Where the level of absence is due to clear medical grounds or extenuating circumstances, we will always support families through any prolonged periods of absence.

The above procedures also refer to punctuality. The number of late arrivals for each child is also analysed and contact will be made with parents and carers where punctuality is causing concern. Again, we will work in partnership with parents and carers to bring about rapid improvement to punctuality.

### **Reporting Absences/Late Arrivals**

If your child is unable to attend school or is going to be late in arriving, please follow the procedure below:

1. Phone the school office - 01904 806429
2. Leave a message or speak to a member of the Admin Team
3. Share the following information:
  - a. Your name
  - b. Your child's name
  - c. Your child's class
  - d. Reason for absence or late arrival. Please be specific about the reasons for absence.
4. Please do this on each day of your child's absence - even if the absence is more than 1 day.

### **Safeguarding and Absence and Punctuality**

The safeguarding of our children is of paramount importance to us at Osbaldwick Primary Academy.

If your child is not in school when the register is taken and we have received no message to explain their absence, a member of the Admin Team will contact parents and carers to ask for a reason for absence. This forms part of our safeguarding duties and this is to ensure that your child is safe.

We ask parents and carers to help this system by phoning and leaving the information as above before 8.45am each day your child will be absent.

### **Term Time Holidays**

Please also note that there is no entitlement to additional holidays during term times. Applications for holidays to be taken during term time may be made to the Headteacher and these will be considered on a case by case basis.

It is vital that your child attends school every day and arrives on time and ready to learn. If, for any reason, your child is finding it difficult to come into school, please do contact our Pastoral Lead, Mrs Bryan Smith via the school office and we will be happy to support you and your child to achieve regular and high levels of attendance.

Best wishes



Mrs J Mould  
Deputy Headteacher

