

# Attendance Policy

At Olive High we are unwavering in our drive to continue to improve the attendance of pupils in order to ensure that every child has the ability to achieve success. We demand the highest level of attendance from pupils so they may develop their full potential during their time at school.

It is our aim to promote and maintain a culture where excellent, attendance and punctuality is recognised and rewarded. Missing out on education has a significant effect on a pupils life opportunities. Everyone associated with Olive High – students, parents, all teaching and support staff and external agencies will do all in their power to ensure that excellent attendance and punctuality maintain an integral part of the school's work.

## **Duties and Responsibilities**

### **Principal**

- Oversee and monitor whole school attendance and punctuality, initiating whole school policies as required. This will be achieved by liaison with the Senior Leadership Team and other relevant members of staff, including Pastoral, Inclusion, and Attendance Admin Officer who together will form the Attendance Improvement Group (AIG).
- Chair for the Attendance Improvement Group
- Support the whole school community in promoting good attendance and punctuality.
- Liaise with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) and Pastoral welfare officer to devise any necessary re-integration programmes for pupils who are persistent absentees (PA) or at risk of long term absence.

### **Pastoral welfare officer**

- Monitor the attendance and punctuality for the year groups (including the monitoring of relevant sub-groups).
- Liaise closely with Progress Leaders and form tutors to reward positive attendance and support where concerns that require further action.
- Liaise with the Attendance Improvement Group where there are concerns about individual pupils or forms.
- Meet regularly with the EWO to sustain good communication and identify and intervene with individual pupils who are PA or at risk of becoming PA. Refer pupils if they are a persistent problem or have reached triggers.
- Act on daily information from staff concerning student absences or habitual lateness.
- Liaise with parents/carers where attendance and/or punctuality are a cause for concern by following the attendance and monitoring procedure.
- Intervene early to arrange and attend meetings with parents and relevant staff where there are attendance issues (e.g. subject truancy).

- Promote good attendance through assemblies
- Offer support and work closely with the parents/carers of pupils who are persistent absentees or at risk of becoming so.

### **Parental Support Advisor**

- Responsible for up-keeping and monitoring of attendance tracker.
- Visits undertaken on first day of absence and where there are on-going concerns.
- Pupils slipping below target (whole school target) to instigate action taken based on the individual student circumstances and discussions with SM team.
- Co-ordinates sending of letters – would liaise with Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance and ensure that this is recorded on whole school tracker.
- Organises meeting with relevant people – when no improvement is seen despite all previous interventions.
- Gathers the information regarding any barriers to a student attending school, but does not attempt to break down the barriers – information passed to SLT.

### **Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance**

- Compile all attendance data and information for relevant staff.
- Make contact with parents/carers on the first day of absence for all students, even where the reason for absence is known.
- Contact parents/carers should any student leave the site without permission.
- Work closely with the SLT and PWO to monitor pupils who present concerns.
- Liaise with the Attendance Improvement Group where there are concerns about individual pupils or forms. Issuing of Fixed Penalty Notice requests as per the LA guidance.

### **Pastoral welfare officer**

- Encourage all pupils to maintain excellent attendance and punctuality.
- Update the Form Attendance information on gmail sheets weekly.
- Direct any correspondence from parents/carers with regard to absences to the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance.
- Keep an overview of students' attendance; follow up unexplained absences and check patterns of absence and poor punctuality by monitoring Student Planner.
- Liaise with SLT to pass on concerns about individual students.

- Take register at the start (within the first 10 minutes) of the beginning of the school day and within 10 minutes after lunch.
- Pass on any concerns about absentees from lessons to the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance as soon as possible.
- Use the Student Planner to record any issues with punctuality – pass on any concerns to the appropriate form tutor.

### **Educational Welfare Officer (EWO)**

- Work closely with relevant staff to establish caseload and feedback information on work in progress.
- Liaise with the Attendance Improvement Group where there are concerns about individual pupils or forms.
- Liaise with SLT to ensure communication is up to date.
- Attend school attendance meetings organised by SLT to monitor individual students' attendance.
- Organise all panel meetings where necessary.
- Carry out home visits.
- Monitor PA students' re-integration with the SLT after long term absence.

### **Student registration requirements**

There are four broad classifications in attendance registers:

**Present** – the student is on the premises at the time of registration.

**Authorised Absence** – an absence authorised by the school which includes illness, medical appointments, bereavement or other circumstances where the school deems attendance to be inappropriate.

**Unauthorised Absence** – an absence where the student does not have good cause to be missing from school. Unauthorised absence can be defined in the following ways:

**Late** - the student has arrived on the premises after registration

Truancy – this is action by pupils who fail to attend school when they should, including leaving the school premises after registration. It also includes action by parents/carers who initiate unauthorised absence by pupils or who collude with it. Shopping trips, day trips, weddings, airport pickup/drop off trips or absence to look after someone else would all constitute examples of unauthorised absence.

School refusal – this is chronic non-attendance over a period of time, usually an indicator of wider family, psychological or behavioural problems.

The school will aim to highlight and resolve any difficulties regarding a student's attendance as early as possible, using our rigorous monitoring and intervention procedures and pastoral support programmes to help solve any problems. If necessary, the Educational Welfare Officer will be involved in more complex cases.

## **Attendance Procedures**

### **Registration**

- Registers must be taken promptly at the start (within the first 10 minutes) of the start of the day. Staff must contact the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance as soon as possible if there are any concerns about absentees.
- Anyone taking pupils out of school for any reason must supply the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance with a list of names and email the list to the appropriate SLT staff and teaching staff.
- Staff must inform colleagues of any pupils taking part in events in school that require pupils to be off timetable.

### **First Day Contact**

- Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance will organise first day contact, even when the reasons for absence are known. This will involve telephoning/texting/emailing all parents/carers when contact hasn't been made.
- There will be occasions when school staff visit homes when we have concerns about persistent or sporadic absence.

### **Outstanding Absences**

- Any outstanding or unexplained absence will be followed up by the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance or Student Managers via contact with parents/carers.
- Until contact is made the absence will remain unauthorised.

### **Exit/Entry to School during the Day**

- Pupils who need to leave during the school day must bring a letter from home and/or an appointment card. Pupils should bring the note from home to Administration Assistant/PWO with responsibility for Attendance
- Pupils must sign out and sign back in at the reception on their return.

- We would encourage all appointments to be made after school hours, so as not to impact on your child's learning.

### **Late arrivals**

Pupils who arrive after 8.45am are considered to be late to school and will be placed in the after school punctuality detention (15 minutes) if deemed necessary. They will be expected to sign in at the reception after 9 with the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance.

All these procedures are very important as in the event of a fire drill it is vital there is an accurate record of who is on site at any time. It is equally important that all Olive High staff sign in and out using the registration system located in reception.

### **Attendance Concerns**

The Attendance Improvement Group will meet monthly to discuss attendance and punctuality concerns. During this meeting the attendance of all pupils will be tracked and the school's Attendance Intervention Protocol will be followed to ensure consistency across the whole school. The protocol has been developed around early intervention and constant communication with parents in order to maximise and maintain good attendance.

- **Medical Concerns and appointments** – we would ask that if there are concerns of a medical nature that would impact on the attendance of your child that parents/carers make us aware of them as soon as possible. We will support any medical needs. We would encourage medical appointments to be made out of school hours at all times, but if this is not possible we would encourage parents/carers to send their child to school both before and after their appointment.
- **Long term absence** – pupils who are long term absentees for whatever reason, often find the return to school problematical. There are both academic and social difficulties which pupils may need time to overcome. For some pupils this may involve a personalised re-integration programme. The programme will be devised by the appropriate member of staff and may include the use of, a partial timetable, pastoral support from the behaviour support team or other member of staff. Parents/carers will be involved throughout the reintegration process and staff will be informed of the re-integration plan. .
- **Leave of Absence Requests and Holiday Absence** – government guidance states that **no absence should be authorised** in advance except as a result of 'exceptional circumstances'. Bereavement and life threatening illness are considered to be exceptional circumstances Leave of absence forms can be downloaded from the school website or obtained from the school

office. Where a parental request has been refused, and parents/carers continue to take their child out of school, this absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The school responds to all holiday requests with a letter to inform parents/carers of the school's decision. Please note that unauthorised absence can result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued.

\* Term time holiday will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and at the schools discretion for a **maximum of 10 school days only**. This will be the only time school will make an exception during the course of the pupils secondary education.

### **Continuing Absence Procedures**

If after 3 days of absence, your child has not been seen and contact has not been made with the school, we will make all reasonable enquiries to establish contact with parents/carers and the child, including making enquiries to known friends and wider family. In the event of an absence of three or more days without contact from the family, a home visit will be made, either by the school pastoral officer or other local authority professional, to ascertain the safety and well-being of the child and in addition to the reason for absence from school.

### **Ten days absence**

We have a legal duty to report the absence of any pupil who is absent without an explanation for 10 consecutive days. If the child is not seen and contact has not been established with the named parent/carer then the local authority is notified that the child is at risk of missing from education (CME).

The Attendance officer will alert SLT who will visit the last known address and alert key services to locate the child. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up-to-date contact number.

\*Please inform the school as soon as possible if your contact details change

### **Understanding absence percentages:**

You may wonder why a school would be concerned of your child's attendance is for example 90%. The following will make it easier to understand:

- 90% equates to half a day off every two weeks
- 85% equates to a day off every two weeks
- 80% equates to one and a half days off every two weeks

- 75% equates to one whole day off every week

A secondary age child whose attendance is 75% will have missed ONE WHOLE YEAR of education by the time they leave school

### **Excessive absence**

- **If a pupil's absence falls below 90% (unauthorised absence) they can be taken off our school register.**
- **If a pupil is absent for more than 4 days, they can be taken off our school register.**
- **If a pupil is absent for 8 weeks or more continuously, they will be taken off our school register.**

### **Leave of absence for holidays**

The School does not normally authorise absence in term-time and strongly discourages parents from making such requests. Each request for term-time absence will be considered on an individual basis, and will normally only be granted if exceptional circumstances apply and will only be for a maximum of 10 days. Parents should be aware of the following possible restrictions:

- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised if the student's attendance is low.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised at any time for students in Years 10 and 11.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised for any students during the school examination period.
- Leave of absence will not normally be authorised in Year 10 during Work Experience fortnight.

Parents must adhere to the procedure outlined below when submitting requests for leave of absence:

- Requests for leave of absence will only be considered on receipt of a completed holiday request form, which can be obtained from the school office. This must include precise details of the reason for the request, and why it would be impossible for the absence to take place during the normal school holiday periods.
- Requests must be received by the Head Teacher before any bookings are made, and at least two weeks (during term time) before the absence. Absence will always be classified as unauthorised if the holiday has not been agreed in advance. **All unauthorised absence will incur a daily fine of £25 per day per student. Students will not be allowed back in school until this money is paid in full.**

If a student fails to return to school on the agreed date following leave of absence, the school reserves the right to remove her name from the register. All absence over the number of days requested will be classed as unauthorised.

### **Unauthorised absence**

The School is bound by DfE regulations. The DfE regards all absence which has not been authorised by the school as truancy.

Absence is classified as unauthorised in the following cases:-

- If the reason for absence is unacceptable to the School
- If the student does not bring a written explanation of absence from a parent
- If the student misses a lesson without the permission of the teacher
- If the student leaves the school site without the advance written permission of a parent, authorised by the relevant Head of Year or staff member.
- If a student takes leave of absence without obtaining prior written permission
- If a student fails to return to school on the agreed date following an authorised leave of absence – including unauthorised extension of authorised holidays.

Unauthorised absence is noted in a student's individual school record and may affect sixth form applications.

### **Rewards and Incentives**

Outstanding attendance is acknowledged and rewarded throughout the year in a variety of ways. Attendance is monitored weekly and pupils achieving above year group targets are recognised. We are also keen to acknowledge the support of parents/carers in working with us to maximise outcomes for our young people.

<b>Date approved by SLT and Board of Governors</b>	<b>Date of next review</b>
<b>01/04/25</b>	<b>01/04/26</b>

## Attendance Guidance for Parents/Carers

**Raise your child's attendance - Raise their chances!**

**Attend today, Achieve tomorrow!**

At Olive High excellent attendance and punctuality is our aim for every student. Full attendance maximises learning opportunities and parents/carers have a vital role in promoting good attitudes in attendance. Evidence shows that pupils who attend school regularly make better progress both academically and socially. We ask for support from parents/carers to:

- Ensure that their children are present at every opportunity
- Ensure that their children arrive on time
- Avoid allowing children to stay at home unnecessarily
- Avoid taking them out of school without authorisation.

We monitor attendance closely and will follow up unexplained absence with parents/carers, by telephone or by letter. The Department for Education's threshold at which a student is defined as 'persistently absent' is 90%. Where an attendance record reaches a concerning level, we will contact parents/carers to discuss ways in which the school can support you and your child.

The school attendance target of 95% is the minimum that we expect for all students. Every lesson counts and it is this commitment to learning that will have a positive impact on attainment and progress and as a result every student should strive to achieve 100% attendance. As 100% is our focus this is where we will target our rewards.

### Reporting Absence

#### **What to do if your child is ill:**

It is very rare that an illness is so severe that a child needs to be absent from school and we would encourage you to send your child to school whenever possible. However, if your child is too ill to attend school, parents/carers should contact the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance as soon as possible within the first 30 minutes of the school day.

Telephone on **01282 479984** as soon as possible.

Please give your child's name, Year Group and the reason for the absence, you must contact school each day that your child is absent. On your child's return following an absence, we request that parents/carers write a brief note

explaining the absence which can be handed to the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance or your child's form tutor.

### **What to do if your child has an appointment:**

We ask that, where possible, you make routine medical and other appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, we require notification in advance. Please telephone, email or provide a note from home or appointment letter/card to confirm the appointment. In most cases, your child should attend school before the appointment and return to the school afterwards. Pupils should bring a note from home to the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance when it is time for them to sign out and sign back in on their return.

### **Phone call/messages to parents/carers:**

We take our safeguarding responsibility seriously. If the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance has received no reason for absence and a student is absent from Period 1 (8.45 – 9.45) a call will be made daily to the contact numbers of parents/carers. Calls are made on a daily basis, even where your child has been absent due to illness on previous days. We cannot assume that your child is still ill unless you have notified us. We would not wish to put your child at risk by failing to contact you. Please ensure your child realises the importance of attending school on time and getting their attendance mark. Parents/carers can also help by ensuring that we hold up to date contact details.

### **Punctuality**

All pupils are expected to arrive to school on time and be ready and punctual to lessons. This is a minimum expectation. Pupils should arrive prompt by 8.30am to be in registration. Pupils are expected to be in Lesson 1 by 8.45am ready to start learning. Pupils who arrive after 9am are considered to be late to school and will be placed in the after school punctuality detention (15 minutes). They will be expected to sign in at the door until 9am and after this point pupils need to sign in to school with the Administration Assistant with responsibility for Attendance. We would ask that you ensure that your child arrives to school on time.

### **Leave of absence**

Absence will not be authorised for reasons such as holidays during term time, shopping for uniform, birthdays, day trips, etc. which may result in the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

If parents/carers wish their child(ren) to be absent for other reasons, such as compassionate leave and special cases, a leave and absence application form should be completed. This form is available from the school office on request.

### **Elective Home Education**

Parents/carers wishing to home school are required to notify the school in writing of their intention to educate at home. The school has a statutory duty to inform the Local Education Authority.

The child will be removed from the school roll immediately based on the date of the letter sent into school.