THE OAK TREE ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Oak Tree Federation

'Inspiring Learning for Life'
This policy reflects the vision and aims of Laughton Community Primary School and Firle Church of England Primary School by

Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.

Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late.

Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a 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 may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This includes:

- parents 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

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Support, Behaviour & Attendance Service from the Local Authority. The Practitioner will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use Legal Interventions on parents

or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

Parents are informed through newsletters and the prospectus that if their child is absent from school; they need to let the school know the reason by telephone on the first morning of absence before 8.45am and each subsequent day. Any unexplained absence will be recorded as unauthorised. Parents are asked to adhere to the school and County policy by not withdrawing their children from school for holidays during term time and are directed to the Attendance Policy on the school website. The fine for taking your child on holiday (5 consecutive days or more) during school term time is £60 per child per parent. We do not authorise any holiday in term time unless there is an exceptional circumstance.

If a child is late (after close of registration) they are brought to the main entrance and the parent has to sign them in at the office, they would then receive a 'U' registration code. If they are late before the register (8:55a.m) closes the teacher marks them as late with an 'L'.

We send out an attendance contract to all parents to sign up to with information on the benefits and research of good attendance.

If a parent/ carer wish to take their child out of school they need to complete a 'Withdrawal from learning' form this then goes to the head teacher for approval. Please see appendices.

Information about individual school targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has adopted the following attendance targets and special projects:

Our attendance target is 96.5%. We will write to all parents whose children are at risk of persistent absence at the end of each term based on the Local authority set target of 10% each term. We will work closely with families to support them in improving their child's attendance.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

Rachel West Executive Head teacher and Safeguarding Lead
Vicki Brown- Head of Schools and Safeguarding Lead

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.
School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible. Our Home School Agreement promotes working in partnership.

This policy was adopted on Thursday 26th November 2018 and will be reviewed biannually

Reviewed January 2020

See appendix attached