



ATTENDANCE



# Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy

## Why is it important for children to attend school?

All parents want their children to get on well in life. In today's work climate, it is more important than ever to have a good education behind you if you want opportunities in adult life. Children only get one chance at school, and your child's chances of a successful future may be affected by not attending school regularly. If children do not attend school they may:

- Struggle to keep up with school work due to missing lessons.
- Miss out on the social side of school life. Poor attendance can affect children's ability to make and keep friendships.
- Employers want to recruit people who are reliable. Children who have a poor school attendance record may have less chance of getting a good job.

An excellent record of attendance at school has a **major impact** on your child's academic progress. Research shows that there is a direct link between poor attendance and poor examination results.

**Every student in OBA has an absolute minimum attendance target of 95%.**

Remember:

- **Missing ½ a day a week** = 90% attendance = 4 weeks missed per year.
- **Missing 1 day a week** = 80% attendance = more than half a term missed per year or 2 full years missed over the course of their school career.
- **Missing 1 ½ days a week** = 70% attendance = more than a quarter of the school year missed.
- **An average attendance of 80%** or less across a child's school career adds up to missing a whole 2 years from school.

This means that your child will miss out on a whole school year of learning during their first five crucial years in secondary education. **Make every second of school count as this time cannot be made back up!**

Just 17 days absent from school a year could mean a drop in GCSE grade across all subjects!

## What must I do as a parent/carer?

Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time.

If your child is going to be absent you must contact the school by 8:30am on the **first day & all subsequent days of absence** on 01928 711643. You can also email attendance@ob-ac.co.uk

Failure to inform the Academy of any absence will result in us having to make contact with you via telephone or a home visit.

If your child's attendance is below 95% you will be required to submit medical evidence to ensure all absences are authorised. Medical evidence can include:

- ❖ Appointment card
- ❖ Copy of a prescription/medication label
- ❖ Letter from a doctor or another medical professional

## What can I do to support my child's attendance?

- **If you suspect that your child may be missing school or is unhappy at school, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can work with you to resolve any difficulties.**
- Make sure your child understands that you do not approve of them missing school, but be on the alert for any particular reasons for non-attendance.
- Take an interest in your child's education and discuss their school life with them. Ask your children about their day and praise and encourage their achievements at school.
- Cooperate with any support offered by the attendance and pastoral teams such as attendance surgeries, attendance reports etc.
- Reinforce that positive attendance is linked to positive progress, and better employment and life opportunities for them in the future.

## What happens if my child does not attend school regularly?

As a school we are responsible by law for reporting poor attendance to the Local Authority Education Welfare Service. As a parent/carer you are legally responsible for ensuring that your child attends school regularly and is punctual. If you fail to do so, you are committing an offence under the Education Act (1996). This may lead to you being issued with a penalty notice, a fine of up to £2,500 or, in extreme cases, even a prison sentence. Unfortunately there have been cases of this in our local community poor attendance has led down this route. This obviously can have long lasting implications for families.

## What are authorised & unauthorised absences?

**Authorised Absences still affect your child's attendance record but have been authorised by the school's attendance team. They may include:**

- Sickness which means that your child is too ill to attend.
- Unavoidable hospital, medical/dental appointments (please give the Academy prior notice).
- Days of religious observance (agreed with Principal beforehand).
- Exceptional family circumstances (e.g. bereavement).
- Going to other providers such as a secondary school visit, interview, or examination.

**Unauthorised Absences may include:**

- Shopping for shoes, uniform or other items or haircuts.
- Looking after family members who are unwell (unless there is an unavoidable emergency when no more than two sessions **may be** authorised).
- Minding the house/waiting for deliveries.
- Birthdays, including parties or treats.
- Day trips/Holidays.

All student absences should be authorised by ensuring you contact the Academy's attendance team and provide medical evidence whenever possible.

### **Holidays in Term Time**

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amended the 2006 Regulations and made it clear that Head Teachers may not grant a leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There is no entitlement in law for any leave of absence from school in term time. Any applications for leave of absence must be made in advance using the 'Leave/Holiday request' form and any request can only be authorised where school accepts there are exceptional circumstances.

Where a pupil is absent without permission of the school the parents/carers of the pupil may be issued with a £60 Penalty notice per parent/per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days the penalty increases to £120. If the notice remains

unpaid after 28 days the local Authority may commence proceedings under Section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the school or the Education Welfare Service.

## **How can school support my child's attendance?**

### ***Attendance & Pastoral Support***

Students attending the academy receive a range of pastoral support from their form tutors and year teams. Your child's form tutor is the first point of contact for any concerns/queries you may have. Within this role the form tutor also delivers a weekly attendance-based form session in which students update their attendance booklets, review their current attendance and discuss attendance and punctuality related topics. If your child is having any difficulties at school, please contact a member of their pastoral team as soon as possible so that we can help resolve these concerns.

The Academy's attendance team may provide additional support for students whose attendance drops below 95% with support such as:

- Attendance reports – designed to support students whose attendance has dipped below 95% to ensure they return to the green attendance club and are eligible for praise and rewards.
- Attendance surgeries – An attendance surgery is a meeting with a member of the attendance team to discuss your child's attendance, create an action plan to improve attendance and to support any issues your child may be having attending school.
- Attendance targets – If your child's attendance drops below 95% you may receive a letter from the attendance team informing you of this and the next steps. These may include a 95% target letter, penalty notice warning letter or a request to attend an attendance meeting.

### **Student Wellbeing Services**

At OBA we are extremely lucky to have a full-time pastoral pupil support centre. Student wellbeing services is a triage service that can support students:

- Who are unwell by providing medication that has been provided to school for short term acute conditions.
- Support for students with existing/longer term conditions.
- Provide first aid and emergency support.
- Support for students who are presenting as unwell during school by providing them with a short period of time out of class, contacting home for medication

if required and arranging for students to be collected by a parent – *Staff will use their professional judgement to triage how the student is presenting in school and contact parents if necessary. Please ensure that your child goes through the correct channels if they are feeling unwell by accessing Student Wellbeing services and not using their mobile phones.*

### ***Praise & Rewards***

At OBA students are rewarded for achieving excellent attendance and punctuality. Rewards and praise are included within the attendance clubs which students review within their tutor groups weekly. Students will be rewarded for improving their attendance as well as maintaining good attendance. Rewards include postcards and texts home, certificates, reward trips, movie/sport afternoons, reward breakfasts and free items of food from the canteen amongst other rewards.

### ***Punctuality***

It is important that all students are on time to school each day. The school gate opens at 8:25am each morning and students can receive a free breakfast of toast and juice at this time. The school day starts at 8:30am and students must be in their form room by 8:35am at the latest. Students who are late to school will receive a detention from the pastoral team. Students will be marked late with an L code on the register.

Students who arrive to school after registers close (9am) will receive a U code on the register. U codes severely affect student's attendance and can be referred to Education Welfare. Students who receive a U code will receive an hour detention.

If your child will be late to school for a genuine reason please contact main reception to report this as soon as possible.

### **Who are the Attendance Team?**

Please feel free to contact a member of the attendance team if you would like to discuss any queries or concerns regarding attendance or punctuality.

Mrs Z Porschke – Assistant Principal Student Welfare & Attendance

Miss R Oram – Year 7 & 8 Attendance Officer

Ms R Campbell – Years 9 & 10 Attendance Officer

Mrs S Cotterill – Year 11 & Sixth form Attendance Officer

Mrs S Crane – Student Wellbeing Services

Mrs P Robins – Education Welfare Officer (Local Authority)