

# School Attendance

## Information for Parents and Carers



[www.blue-coat.oldham.sch.uk](http://www.blue-coat.oldham.sch.uk)

### Why does attendance matter?

We expect all our students to strive for 100% attendance. Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well at school. It will set them up with good routines for later life and the working world, as well as helping them to:

- Make lots of friends and feel included;
- Learn new things and develop skills;
- Increase confidence and self-esteem;
- Improve social skills;
- Achieve potential and fulfil aspirations.

**In order for your child to achieve the highest possible grades they must be in school**

Whilst we understand that illness naturally leads to absence it is important to ensure your child attends school whenever they can. For example, if a child attends school 90% of the time they are absent for the equivalent of **one half day a week**. This results in the child **missing 4 weeks of lessons over a year** and a **whole year of schooling over their school career**.

By law, schools must record absences and the reasons given.

### Authorised & Unauthorised Absences:

An absence will normally be coded as authorised in the following circumstances

- Illness of the pupil;
- Hospital / dental appointment for the pupil;
- Death of a near relative;
- Religious Observance

Absences for the following reasons will be unauthorised:

- A shopping trip;
- A birthday treat;
- Oversleeping due to a late night;
- Looking after other children;
- Household appointments.

### Informing school

Whenever your child is going to be absent from school we ask that you:

- Contact school before 8:30 on the first day of absence. If we are not notified that your child will be absent we will contact you to find out why they are not in school;
- Let the school know in advance of any planned absences e.g. hospital appointments;
- Where at all possible make medical/dental appointments out of school hours.

### Term Time Holidays

Family holidays should take place during the school holiday dates, which are published a year in advance. Please be mindful that absence due to a holiday is not, and never has been a parent's entitlement. By law, the Headteacher is unable to authorise any holidays in term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. If there are **exceptional** reasons why you need to take your child on holiday in term time, please complete a holiday form, which can be obtained from student services or the school website. Holiday cost, climate and availability will not be considered by the Headteacher. We may look at other factors when deciding whether to authorise an absence request including the student's record of attendance and whether they will miss any examinations.

**Your child can be taken off the school roll (lose their place) after 20 days of continuous non attendance**

### Arriving late to school

Being just 5 minutes late a day is equivalent to missing 3.4 school days per year. When a child arrives late to school, it can be very disruptive not only to your child but also to the teacher and to other children in the class. If your child is late (after 8.45am) they will be marked as late on the register and a text sent home. They will be expected to attend a same day detention. If your child arrives after 9.00 without good reason they will be marked as absent for the morning session. The absence will be unauthorised and will affect their attendance record. They will be expected to attend a same day detention.

### Working with you to improve your child's attendance

If your child's attendance level drops below our expected levels without good reason we will contact you to see how we can work together to bring their attendance up. We will then monitor their attendance closely and if it does not improve, we will invite you in to a meeting and may ask you to sign a contract to demonstrate what you will do to ensure their attendance improves.

### The Fast Track Process

Children whose attendance levels do not improve or those with unauthorised absences may be placed on the Fast-Track programme which is intensive support designed to ensure the child, parent and school take all necessary steps to bring the child's attendance levels up. As part of this process, medical evidence may be requested for all absences or they will be recorded as unauthorised

### Absence and the Law

As a parent you are committing an offence if you fail to make sure that your child attends regularly, even if they are missing school without your knowledge. Should children have unauthorised absences despite interventions from the school, we will consider taking legal action against the parents. This could include a fine and / or prosecution.

### Tackling absence:

- Increases children and young people's opportunities;
- Increases children's attainment and achievement;
- Makes children safer;
- Reduces the risk of children becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour;
- Reduces the risk of children getting involved in alcohol and substance misuse;
- Makes our wider community a safer place for everyone.

### Every Day Counts ...

Blue Coat School is committed to providing all children with the best start in life and works hard to ensure that all children in our learning community attend school regularly.

**A strong partnership between the school and parents is a key factor in ensuring children attend school regularly**

Special arrangements can be made to support your child to remain in school during periods of illness or injury. Examples include:

- Studying in the green room so that student doesn't have to navigate stairs
- Taking medicine in school supervised by the School's First Aider
- An early exit pass from lesson
- Access to the School Nurse in the weekly clinic or by special arrangement

The following organisations may be able to provide support and advice if you or your child have concerns:

- Youth in Mind (Oldham/Tameside/Rochdale) - [www.togmind.org/youth-mind](http://www.togmind.org/youth-mind) / 0161 330 9223
- Oasis Drug & Alcohol Service - 0161 621 9400
- Kooth Counselling Service – [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

### Further Information:

Blue Coat offers support and advice about your child's attendance.

If you would like to discuss this further please contact Mrs. Henry, Student Support and Attendance Manager on 0161 624 1484

**Attendance**  
*Every school day counts!*