

# Attendance and Punctuality policy



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|-----------------------|----------------|
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## Introduction

This policy aims to show our commitment to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance, including those laid out in the statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE).

We aim to achieve this through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, which includes:

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and punctuality and the benefits of good attendance and punctuality
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to make sure pupils have the support in place to attend school

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all staff, pupils, parents and carers and governors understand their roles and responsibilities and have clear expectations. Attendance and punctuality is the responsibility of all.

At Olga Primary School we understand that good attendance and punctuality impacts on the achievements of our pupils at school academically, socially and personally.

Our school attendance target is 96%

Children who have attendance of 96% or above are well placed to make at least good progress at school.

Where pupils have less than 96% attendance, research shows that this impacts on their learning outcomes.

### Attendance at 95%

- Pupils miss 9.5 days per year (approximately 9-10 days)
- This equates to nearly 2 school weeks of lost learning time
- Over their primary school career (7 years), this adds up to approximately 66-67 days or over 13 weeks of missed education.

### Attendance at 90%

- Pupils miss 19 days per year
- This equates to nearly 4 school weeks of lost learning time
- Over their primary school career, this totals approximately 133 days or over 26 weeks – that's more than half a school year of lost learning.

Attendance below 90% is classed as Persistent Absence

# EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS

Don't miss out on the education you deserve.



## 1. Aims

The aim of this policy is:

- To encourage prompt arrival at school
- To encourage good attendance of 96% or above
- To ensure that routines are in place for monitoring attendance and punctuality
- To enable the school to identify families easily and quickly in need of support to ensure excellent attendance and punctuality

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy is based on the DfE's statutory guidance on [Working together to improve school attendance](#) and [School attendance parental responsibility measures](#). The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The School Attendance \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2024](#)
- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/1751/contents> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- The [Equality Act 2010](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2013/757/regulation/2/made>

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)
- [Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit](#)

### 3. Roles and responsibilities

A whole school approach is taken to improve attendance and punctuality and working in partnership with parents and carers is key to our aim of improving both. This approach is underpinned by clear expectations, procedures, and responsibilities.

#### Parents and carers:

- Ensure your child attends school every day except when a statutory reason applies (e.g. illness).
- Notify the school administration team by 9am on the day when your child will be absent.
- Provide a clear reason for the absence and show the school administration team documentation (appointment letters and cards).
- Book any medical appointments around the school day, where possible.
- Work with Olga Primary School and our Attendance and Punctuality Team to help them understand your child's barriers to attendance and punctuality.
- Proactively engage with the support offered by the school, the Attendance and Punctuality Team and the Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO), including attending meetings where relevant.

#### School Administration Team:

- Call any parents and carers in the morning if their child is absent and there has been no contact with the school.
- Contact emergency contacts for the child if parents and carers do not respond to the call from the school.
- Ensure that the Safeguarding and Attendance Lead is aware of any children who are not in school and where parents and carers have not responded to the call from the school.
- Amend codes in the register to ensure all absences are coded correctly within 5 working days after the absence.
- Prepare and provide attendance and punctuality print outs as needed.

#### Class Teachers:

- Have day-to-day conversations with parents and carers or pupils regarding absence and/or lateness.

- Ensure the register for the class is completed correctly and in a timely manner (10 minutes after the registration period starts).
- Promote attendance and punctuality in the class and implement whole school incentives.
- Update parents and carers on their child's attendance and absences at parents and carers' evening.

#### Safeguarding and Attendance Lead:

- Ensure day-to-day communication takes place with families to ascertain reasons for absences and to support families with attendance, punctuality and wider issues.
- Identify any absences and lateness which are not explained for each session and contact parents and carers to ascertain reasons and clarify when pupils will return.
- Conduct home visits, including first day absence visits, when deemed necessary.
- Support with devising strategies or support for families where a pupil has medical needs.
- Submit Early Help Assessments where there are wider needs and a whole family response is more appropriate.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Liaise with the school administration team on a daily basis to understand which children are late or absent.
- Lead a weekly Attendance and Punctuality Team Meeting to review and analyse attendance and punctuality patterns for all pupils.
- Plan support for families who are facing challenges in terms of attendance and punctuality.
- Schedule and lead half termly informal Attendance and Punctuality Meeting(s) for families.
- Schedule and support the AWO to lead half termly formal attendance and punctuality meetings for families.
- Produce reports relating to attendance and punctuality for individuals, groups, cohorts and at whole school level as needed.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensity support through statutory children's social care.

#### Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion:

- To join the Safeguarding and Attendance Lead to meet with parents and carers of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) to discuss strategies to improve attendance and/or punctuality.
- To support devising strategies or support for families where a pupil has SEND.
- To ensure attendance is discussed during annual review meetings

#### Attendance & Welfare Officer (AWO):

- Meet regularly with the Attendance and Punctuality Team.
- Monitor registers and conduct reports.
- Lead formal Attendance and Punctuality Meetings with parents and carers.
- Conduct phone calls and/or home visits when deemed necessary.
- Work jointly with the school to provide formal support options.
- Issue penalty notices when deemed necessary.
- Support with referrals for legal interventions.

#### Headteacher:

- Lead on maintaining a whole-school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance and punctuality.
- For pupils who are persistently or severely absent, attend meetings with parents and carers where there is a lack of engagement.
- Grant leaves of absence only in exceptional circumstances.
- Where there are safeguarding concerns, intensify support through statutory children's social care.
- Report attendance data to Governors.
- Ensure all staff receive training on attendance and punctuality as part of their Continued Professional Development.

#### Governors:

- Ensure the Attendance and Punctuality policy is easily accessible to pupils, parents, carers, and staff.
- Regularly review attendance data and conduct a thorough examination of historic and current trends.
- Work with the Headteacher, and other key members of staff to set goals for attendance.

The link governor for Attendance is Shelima Begum. They meet termly with the school to review and monitor attendance

## **4. Attendance Register**

We keep an electronic attendance register and place all pupils on it.

We take our attendance register at the start of each morning session of each school day and at the start of each afternoon session.

The school day starts at 9am and ends at 3:30pm for children in Years 1 to 6 (3:20pm for pupils in EYFS)

Our school gate opens at 8:50am each morning and closes at 9am to ensure that children have time to get to their classroom, put their coats and bags away and are ready to start their learning.

Registers are legal documents, and it is the responsibility of the class teacher to ensure that the register for their class is accurately completed for both the morning and afternoon session each day. The register provides evidence regarding attendance and lateness. They are used to provide termly and annual statistical returns. They are also used if Tower Hamlets takes legal action against parents and carers.

Class Teachers must complete the register, on Arbour, at the start of the morning and afternoon session. Children will be marked as present, late or absent

The table below shows the timings for the morning and afternoon registration across the school

|             | Morning Registration Period | Afternoon Registration Period |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| EYFS        | 9am – 9:10am                | 12:45 - 12:55pm               |
| Y1, 2 and 3 | 9am – 9:10am                | 12:45 - 12:55pm               |
| Y4, 5 and 6 | 9am – 9:10am                | 1:45 - 1:55pm                 |

When a teacher is absent, a supply log in will be given to the person covering the class so that the register can still be completed

On days when classes are going on trips, teachers will complete registers before departing. For whole days trips, teachers will record, via INventry, which children are leaving the site and any who are remaining in school. The school admin team will then complete the afternoon register on the teacher's behalf

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

## 5. Authorised Absence

### Illness

When a pupil is unable to attend school through illness, parents and carers have a duty to inform the school by phone on 020 8981 7127, or in person on the first day of absence, by 9am.

Parents and carers will be expected to provide the name and class for their child and the reason for the absence. The school admin team will then record this directly on our MIS, Arbour.

We will mark absence due to physical or mental illness as authorised, unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

Where there are doubts about the authenticity of the illness, or for periods of illness lasting over 3 days, the school will ask for medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card, or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

## Medical and Dental Appointments

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent notifies the school in advance of the appointment.

Parents and carers should provide the school with proof of the appointment, and we expect that for most appointments pupils will only need to miss part of the school day, coming to school before and / after the appointment.

However, we encourage parents and carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Other valid reasons for authorised absence include (but are not limited to):

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent(s) belong(s). If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parent's religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart for religious observance
- Parent(s) travelling for occupational purposes – a pupil is a mobile child if their parent is travelling in the course of their trade or business and the pupil is travelling with them. In these circumstances a pupil will be considered as a mobile child, provided they are of compulsory school age and have no fixed abode and whose parent is in a trade or business that requires them to travel from place to place
- If the pupil is currently suspended or excluded from school (and no alternative provision has been made)

## Absences from the school site (which are not classified as absences)

The headteacher will allow pupils to be absent from the school site for certain educational activities, or to attend other schools or settings. These are not classified as absences. Reasons include (but are not limited to):

- Attending an offsite approved educational activity, sporting activity or visit or trip arranged by the school
- Attending another school at which the pupil is also registered (dual registration)
- Attending provision arranged by the local authority
- If there is any other unavoidable cause for the pupil not to attend school, such as disruption to travel caused by an emergency, a lack of access arrangements, or because the school premises are closed

## **6. Unauthorised Absence**

If parents and carers fail to provide a reason or proof of illness, the pupil's absence will be marked as unauthorised.

Unauthorised absence is considered as truancy. Where there is consistent unauthorised absence, the school will refer the family to the Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO).

## 7. Pupils who are absent without a reason

The pupil's parent must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am, or as soon as practically possible, by calling the school admin staff, who can be contacted via telephone on 020 8981 7127

Where parents and carers have not informed the school of their child's absence, the school will phone on the first day of absence to clarify the reason and to remind the parents and carers of the need to contact the school.

Where the school is unable to gain a response from the parents and carers, the school will contact the emergency contacts for the child.

If the school is still unable to reach the parents and carers, the school may complete a first day absence home visit and if needed, take further steps including contacting the police and / or Tower Hamlets Multi- Agency Support Team (MAST) and / or Tower Hamlets Attendance and Welfare Team, to ensure the safety and well-being of the child and family.

## 8. Extended Leave

The headteacher will only grant a **leave of absence** to a pupil during term time if the request meets the specific circumstances set out in the [2024 school attendance regulations](#). These circumstances are:

- Taking part in a regulated performance, or regulated employment abroad
- Attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution
- Study leave
- A temporary, time-limited part-time timetable
- Exceptional circumstances

A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are events that are "rare, significant, unavoidable and short". By 'unavoidable' we mean an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time, outside of school term time.

Exceptional circumstances *may* include the death or terminal illness or wedding of a close relative (a close relative is typically defined as the child's parent, sibling (including step - parent and step-sibling), grandparent, aunt or uncle).

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it will not be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

Parents and carers must provide supporting evidence of any exceptional circumstances and why the leave must be taken in term time instead of in the school holidays. All applications will be considered carefully, including how the pupil's educational progress could be affected. Where the request for leave involves travelling abroad parents and carers are asked to produce the return tickets before leave can be considered for approval.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and **must be submitted at least 10 days in advance**. Applications received during or after a pupil has been on leave during term time cannot be considered and the absence will be unauthorised. Applications need to be made via a

google form using this link <https://forms.gle/8yunE8LReuw9xVgi7> which is also available on the school website.

After 21 consecutive unauthorised school days leave, pupils will be removed from the school roll

## **9. Nursery and Reception Attendance**

Children who attend school every day have the best opportunities to make good progress in their learning, develop secure attachments, and build strong friendships. It is the parents and carers' responsibility to ensure that they help their children to understand how important education is by bringing their children to school on time and on a daily basis, forming good habits early.

Good attendance is essential if children are to be settled and take full advantage of the learning and development opportunities available to them at school. At a young age, continuity and consistency are important contributors to a child's well-being and progress.

Parents and carers of children under 5, whose attendance and punctuality are inconsistent, and poor will be contacted by the school, and their future attendance and punctuality will be monitored. If there is a cause for concern, the school will offer support, working in partnership with external agencies as needed.

Although attendance is not statutory until the term after a child turns five, requests for extended leave in the Early Years Foundation Stage at Olga Primary School are treated the same way as for the rest of the school. If a child is absent for 21 consecutive school days, they may be off rolled at the Headteachers' discretion.

## **10. Siblings**

Where one child in a family is ill, parents and carers are expected to bring any other sibling(s) to school as usual.

## **11. Known medical cases**

For children with ongoing health issues that we are aware of, we will work closely with families and appropriate health professionals to understand how the condition can impact on attendance and / or punctuality and to ensure that we can offer the correct support.

For those children with short term acute illness such as chicken pox, they may be exempt from the follow up procedures and dealt with on an individual basis once medical evidence has been provided.

## **12. Punctuality**

Once the school gates have been closed, any child arriving at school after this time will have to go into school via the school office. Parents and carers will be required to provide a reason for the lateness.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Punctuality is carefully monitored and where lateness is approaching or at a level of concern, parents and carers will be invited to meet with the school to identify strategies and support. In the event of continued lateness, a Notice to Improve and / or a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) may be issued where a pupil has 10 sessions of lateness in a 10-week period.

### **13. School procedures in cases for intervention**

Although a range of strategies and actions will be taken on an informal basis, particular steps are applied where a child's attendance is unexplained or falls below 96% and / or where there are ongoing concerns around punctuality.

The school will regularly inform parents and carers about their child's attendance and absence levels using a half termly traffic light system. This allows parents and carers to be able to see at a glance their child's attendance and be able to understand if there is any concern. More information about this is available on our school website

Annual attendance will also be shared with parents and carers in their child's annual report to parents and carers

#### Wave 2 – School Intervention

Where an absence is unexplained or the reason for the absence remains ambiguous, the school attendance officer will telephone the home, to inform that the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Attendance and punctuality for all pupils is monitored on a weekly basis by the school. Each half term, parents and carers will be requested to attend a review meeting. This will either be at an 'informal' stage, led by the school or at a 'formal' stage, led by the AWO.

The aim of these meetings is to:

- Keep the parent and carer aware of their child's attendance and / or punctuality.
- Identify strategies for improvement, seeking to find ways of overcoming barriers to ensure good attendance and punctuality
- Provide encouragement when the level of attendance shows improvement.

The school will work hard at this stage, in partnership with parents and carers, to try to improve attendance and punctuality for the child.

Intervention at this stage is rooted in Growth Mind set approaches, where it is possible for it to be better, where we can get back on track, and together with parents and carers we endeavor to help, support and seek to find solutions. Generally, this second wave of intervention is all that it takes to convey a strong message regarding the importance of regular attendance and punctuality, and we see a sustained improvement from this point. This will be closely monitored.

#### Wave 3 – Local Authority and School Intervention

If monitoring demonstrates that improvements have not been made and attendance and/or punctuality continues to fall, the school must refer the matter to the Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO). In such instances:

- i. the parent or carer will be expected to attend a meeting with the Attendance and Welfare Officer (AWO) and the Safeguarding and Attendance Lead where the concerns will be outlined and the parent or carer given strategies for improvement coupled with a clear expectation for improvement.
- ii. If further monitoring demonstrates that the child's attendance and/or punctuality has not improved, the Local Authority will serve a Court Warning letter.
- iii. If further monitoring demonstrates that the child's attendance has still not improved, the Local Authority will serve a Court Summons.

What is encouraged at every stage is improvement. So long as improvement is evident, the interventions will cease. This is because children only have one chance for their education, and their education is their right and their entitlement. All parents and carers have a responsibility to make sure their children receive their entitlement to education and thereby get the best possible start in life.

#### 14. Education supervision order

In cases where voluntary early help plans have been unsuccessful, we may work with the local authority to issue an education supervision order. If an education supervision order is considered, the local authority will inform the parent(s) in writing and set up a meeting.

An education supervision order is a formal intervention but **not** criminal prosecution.

An education supervision order initially lasts for 1 year, but it can be extended within the last 3 months for a period of up to 3 years at a time.

In cases where parents and carers persistently fail to meet the directions given under the education supervision order, they may be liable to a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.

#### 15. Notice to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents and carers do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents and carers a final chance to engage with support.

A notice to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

It will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents and carers under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued, or prosecution considered, if attendance does not improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis

- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period
- 

## 16. Penalty notices

The headteacher, local authority or the police can fine parents and carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a penalty notice.

If the school issues a penalty notice, we will check with the local authority before doing so and send the local authority a copy of any penalty notice issued.

Before issuing a penalty notice, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)
- Whether a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support, a notice to improve or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate

Each parent who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/parents and carers who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** penalty notice, the parent must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil, the parent must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first penalty notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents and carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parents and carers that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day). These penalty notices are not included in the National Framework, not subject to the same considerations about support being provided, and do not count towards the limit as part of the escalation process.

In these cases, the parent must pay £60 within 21 days, or £120.

## 17. Attendance monitoring

### Monitoring attendance

The school will monitor attendance and absence data (including punctuality) weekly, half-termly, termly, and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil, year group and cohort level.

Specific pupil information will be shared with the DfE on request.

Data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics.

The school will benchmark its attendance data at whole school, year group and cohort levels against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement and share this with the governing board.

### Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and
- Identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence
- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full-year data to identify patterns and trends
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

### Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups, or cohorts that it has identified via data analysis
- Provide targeted support to the pupils we have identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including the special educational needs coordinator and designated safeguarding lead)
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place to modify them and inform future strategies
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities, and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate

### Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Consider potential safeguarding issues and, where suspected or present, address them in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Hold regular meetings with the parents and carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable or at risk of persistent or severe absence, or who are persistently or severely absent, to:
  - Discuss attendance and engagement at school
  - Listen, and understand barriers to attendance
  - Explain the help that is available
  - Explain the potential consequences of, and sanctions for, persistent and severe absence
  - Review any existing actions or interventions
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance, in conjunction with the local authority, where relevant
- Consider alternative support that could be put in place to remove any barriers to attendance and re-engage these pupils. In doing so, the school will sensitively consider some of the reasons for absence

## **18. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority and/or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Lisa Bradley-Jones, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **19. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Wellbeing Policy
- SEND Policy
- Pupil Premium Policy
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions
- Pupil mental health and wellbeing
- EYFS policy

## Attendance & Punctuality: A guide for parents and carers

Olga Primary School | September 2026

### Why Attendance Matters

**Every day counts!** Children with 96% attendance or above are well-placed to make good progress at school.

### What does missing school really mean?

| Attendance | Days missed per year | Impact over 7 years                 |
|------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 95%        | 9-10 days (2 weeks)  | 13 weeks of learning lost           |
| 90%        | 19 days (4 weeks)    | <b>26 weeks - over half a year!</b> |

**Below 90% = Persistent Absence**

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### Your Responsibilities as a Parent or Carer

- ✓ **Ensure your child attends school every day** (except when genuinely ill)
- ✓ **Call us by 9am** on the first day of any absence (020 8981 7127)
- ✓ **Provide a clear reason** and show documentation for appointments
- ✓ **Book medical appointments** around the school day where possible
- ✓ **Bring siblings to school** even if one child is ill
- ✓ **Work with us** to overcome any barriers to attendance

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### Absence: What You Need to Know

#### ✓ **Authorised Absence**

- Genuine illness (medical evidence may be requested after 3 days)
- Medical/dental appointments (with proof - please schedule outside school hours where possible)
- Exceptional circumstances (rare, significant, unavoidable and short)

## **Unauthorised Absence**

- Family holidays during term time
- Shopping trips or days out
- Birthdays
- Looking after siblings
- No reason provided

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### **Holidays During Term Time**

**We cannot authorise holidays during term time.** Leave will only be granted in truly exceptional circumstances

- Applications must be made **at least 10 days in advance** via our online form
- Proof of where the child will be staying and travel tickets must be provided
- Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued by the Local Authority
- After 21 consecutive unauthorised days, your child may be removed from the school roll

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### **How We Support You**

We want to work **in partnership** with you. If attendance or punctuality becomes a concern:



**Half-termly traffic light reports** - so you can see at a glance how your child is doing



**School Support** - Informal meetings to identify barriers and find solutions together



**Formal Support** - Meetings with our Attendance & Welfare Officer and Safeguarding and Attendance Lead if concerns continue

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### **Penalty Notices**

If attendance doesn't improve despite support, the school or local authority may issue penalty notices:

- **First notice:** £80 (if paid within 21 days) or £160 (within 28 days)
- **Second notice:** £160 (within 28 days)
- **10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 weeks** triggers consideration of a penalty notice
- **10 late arrivals (after register closes) in 10 weeks** may also result in a penalty notice

**Our Attendance Target: 96%** -Let's work together to give your child the best possible start in life!

## Appendix B: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's [guidance on school attendance](#).

| Code                                           | Definition                                                                          | Scenario                                                                                                                               |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| /                                              | Present (am)                                                                        | Pupil is present at morning registration                                                                                               |
| \                                              | Present (pm)                                                                        | Pupil is present at afternoon registration                                                                                             |
| L                                              | Late arrival                                                                        | Pupil arrives late before register has closed                                                                                          |
| <b>Attending a place other than the school</b> |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                        |
| K                                              | Attending education provision arranged by the local authority                       | Pupil is attending a place other than a school at which they are registered, for educational provision arranged by the local authority |
| V                                              | Attending an educational visit or trip                                              | Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised or approved by the school                                                              |
| P                                              | Participating in a sporting activity                                                | Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school                                                        |
| W                                              | Attending work experience                                                           | Pupil is on an approved work experience placement                                                                                      |
| B                                              | Attending any other approved educational activity                                   | Pupil is attending a place for an approved educational activity that is not a sporting activity or work experience                     |
| D                                              | Dual registered                                                                     | Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered                                                         |
| <b>Absent – leave of absence</b>               |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                        |
| C1                                             | Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad | Pupil is undertaking employment (paid or unpaid) during school hours, approved by the school                                           |
| M                                              | Medical/dental appointment                                                          | Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment                                                                                            |

|                                                                      |                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>J1</b>                                                            | Interview                                   | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment                                                               |
| <b>S</b>                                                             | Study leave                                 | Pupil has been granted leave of absence to study for a public examination                                                                  |
| <b>X</b>                                                             | Not required to be in school                | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend                                                                               |
| <b>C2</b>                                                            | Part-time timetable                         | Pupil is not in school due to having a part-time timetable                                                                                 |
| <b>C</b>                                                             | Exceptional circumstances                   | Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances                                                                 |
| <b>Absent – other authorised reasons</b>                             |                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>T</b>                                                             | Parent travelling for occupational purposes | Pupil is a ‘mobile child’ who is travelling with their parent(s) who are travelling for occupational purposes                              |
| <b>R</b>                                                             | Religious observance                        | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance                                                                                      |
| <b>I</b>                                                             | Illness (not medical or dental appointment) | Pupil is unable to attend due to illness (either related to physical or mental health)                                                     |
| <b>E</b>                                                             | Suspended or excluded                       | Pupil has been suspended or excluded from school and no alternative provision has been made                                                |
| <b>Absent – unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause</b> |                                             |                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Q</b>                                                             | Lack of access arrangements                 | Pupil is unable to attend school because the local authority has failed to make access arrangements to enable attendance at school         |
| <b>Y1</b>                                                            | Transport not available                     | Pupil is unable to attend because school is not within walking distance of their home and the transport normally provided is not available |

|                                      |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Y2</b>                            | Widespread disruption to travel             | Pupil is unable to attend because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national, or international emergency                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Y3</b>                            | Part of school premises closed              | Pupil is unable to attend because they cannot practicably be accommodated in the part of the premises that remains open                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Y4</b>                            | Whole school site unexpectedly closed       | Every pupil absent as the school is closed unexpectedly (e.g., due to adverse weather)                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Y5</b>                            | Criminal justice detention                  | <p>Pupil is unable to attend as they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In police detention</li> <li>• Remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or</li> <li>• Detained under a sentence of detention</li> </ul> |
| <b>Y6</b>                            | Public health guidance or law               | Pupil's travel to or attendance at the school would be prohibited under public health guidance or law                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Y7</b>                            | Any other unavoidable cause                 | To be used where an unavoidable cause is not covered by the other codes                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Absent – unauthorised absence</b> |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>G</b>                             | Holiday not granted by the school           | Pupil is absent for the purpose of a holiday, not approved by the school                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>N</b>                             | Reason for absence not yet established      | Reason for absence has not been established before the register closes                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>O</b>                             | Absent in other or unknown circumstances    | No reason for absence has been established, or the school is not satisfied that the reason given would be recorded using one of the codes for authorised absence                                                                                 |
| <b>U</b>                             | Arrived in school after registration closed | Pupil has arrived late, after the register has closed but before the end of session                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Administrative codes</b>          |                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|          |                                             |                                                                                        |
|----------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>z</b> | Prospective pupil not on admission register | Pupil has not joined school yet but has been registered                                |
| <b>#</b> | Planned whole-school closure                | Whole-school closures that are known and planned in advance, including school holidays |

#### Appendix C: Key Contact Information

To report your child's absence call 020 8981 7127 before 9am - **do not** email to report your child's absence

To request leave during term time please complete this form at least 10 days before  
<https://forms.gle/8yunE8LReuw9xVgi7>

If you would like to meet with the Safeguarding and Attendance Lead to discuss your child's attendance and / or punctuality please email  
[attendance@olga.towerhamlets.sch.uk](mailto:attendance@olga.towerhamlets.sch.uk)

## Appendix D: Tower Hamlets Fixed Penalty Notice Information