



November 2024

Dear parents/carers,

At Oswald Road Primary School, we firmly believe that regular school attendance is essential for the educational progress and overall wellbeing of our pupils. We share the Department for Education's (DfE) ambitions to improve school attendance. In this letter we have highlighted some of the support on offer from Oswald Road Primary School. However, we also want to describe the important nationwide changes that come into force on 19th August 2024 in relation to the issuing of fines.

Why regular attendance matters

Consistent school attendance allows your child to:

- ☐ Fully engage in learning and make academic progress
- ☐ Develop critical social skills by interacting with their friends and teachers
- ☐ Grow in confidence in a supportive and nurturing school environment
- ☐ Build a sense of routine and responsibility, essential for future success

Support First

Oswald Road Primary School understand that some pupils may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our school's attendance team is here to provide support and guidance to pupils and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please reach out to Amy Nelson, our School Inclusion Officer. She is based in the school office, Monday to Wednesday 8am- 3pm. Alternatively you can contact her via email at attendance@oswaldroad.manchester.sch.uk or via telephone on [0161 881 4266](tel:01618814266).

As a school, we understand there are differing reasons why a child's attendance may fall to a certain percent and as such, we offer different ways to support you and your family. Our approach as a school is to consider attendance data weekly and to implement Attendance Support Plans, where appropriate, which allows us to tailor support on a family by family basis.

There are times that a percentage is lower for a reason that would not require an Attendance Support Plan and the reasons for absence are always considered when analysing the attendance data. The attendance team considers each child as an individual and then implements support for the family, tailored to the child's needs. If appropriate the school will put a 'monitoring' phase in ahead of implementing an Attendance Support Plan.

Once an Attendance Support Plan is in place, the school will continue to monitor the child's attendance and punctuality and implement each step of the plan where appropriate.

Please see the School Attendance Policy for further information on the steps involved with these plans. You can find this on the school website.

What happens if my child has a period of unauthorised absence?

One of the main changes from the Department for Education is how **sanctions for unauthorised absence are used**.

If you take an unauthorised holiday in term time or have other periods of unauthorised absence the headteacher will notify Manchester City Council and you may be issued a fine (known as a fixed-penalty notice). If issued with one, you'll need to pay this directly to the local authority – £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

The decision whether to issue a fine will take into account whether a national threshold has been met – this is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks – as well as other factors.

If there was a second period of unauthorised absence within a three-year period then a second penalty notice could be issued, and this would be at the higher rate of £160.

Further periods of absence within three years, could mean that you are taken to court with no option of a penalty notice.

These rules came into force across the country on 19th August 2024 as part of the Department for Education's drive to improve school attendance

Term-time holidays are generally not permitted during the school year. Absences due to term-time holidays are disruptive to learning and lead to missed opportunities in the classroom.

However, we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances and in such rare cases, please submit a formal request to the headteacher well in advance. The headteacher will carefully consider each request on an individual basis.

Thank you for your co-operation and commitment in ensuring your child is in school every day.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Howard (Headteacher) & Amy Nelson (Inclusion Officer)