

Otterburn Primary School and Nursery



School Attendance Policy

Updated September 2026

Approved by:	Alison Woodcock (Headteacher) Sarah Mand (Chair of Governors)	Date: September 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	September 2027	

Summary of changes – September 2026:

This policy has been reviewed as part of the school's annual policy review cycle. It has been updated to reflect current statutory guidance and legislation and to ensure that the procedures and support arrangements described within the policy reflect current practice at Otterburn Primary School and Nursery.

Policy Consultation & Review

This policy is available on our school website and is available on request from the school office.

We recognise the expertise our staff build by managing school attendance daily and we therefore invite staff to contribute to and shape this policy and associated attendance and safeguarding arrangements.

This policy will be reviewed in full on at least an annual basis.

This policy was reviewed in September 2026 and will be reviewed at least annually thereafter.

Introduction

The Department for Education (DfE) has produced statutory guidance for schools and local authorities entitled *Working together to improve school attendance*. This guidance sets out expectations for maintaining high levels of school attendance and includes the National Framework for Penalty Notices.

Our School Attendance Policy reflects the requirements and principles of that guidance including the importance of understanding the potential vulnerabilities of children who are missing education or absent from school

Excellent attendance promotes excellent learning. Regular school attendance is essential if children are to achieve their full potential.

We believe that regular school attendance is crucial to allowing children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who can realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Otterburn Primary School values all pupils. As set out in this policy, we will work with families to identify the reasons for poor attendance at an early stage and try to resolve any difficulties.

We believe attendance is a shared responsibility, involving the whole school community and local community; Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a thread that runs through all aspects of school improvement, and is supported by our policies on safeguarding, bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

We define our key levels of attendance as:

Attendance	Description	Days lost per year	Number of weeks lost per year approx.
100% - 98%	Excellent	0 to 4	Less than 1
97% - 95%	Good	5 to 10	1 - 2
94% - 93%	Satisfactory	11 to 13	2 -3
92% -91%	Unsatisfactory	15 to 17	3 -4
90.% and below	Persistent Absence	19 or more	4 or more

There are 190 days in a school year, each day has 2 sessions, morning and afternoon.

Understanding attendance

There are 190 days in a school year, with two attendance sessions each day: morning and afternoon.

The school monitors attendance regularly to identify emerging patterns of absence and pupils who may require additional support.

A pupil is considered to be persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their possible school sessions for any reason. A pupil is considered to be severely absent when they miss 50% or more of their possible school sessions.

We recognise that attendance percentages alone do not explain the reasons for absence. Where concerns emerge, the school will work with the pupil and their family to understand any barriers to attendance and provide or facilitate appropriate support.

Principles

We believe the following important principles underpin our approach to managing attendance:

- Pupils and parents/carers understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- All school staff, including governors, administrative and support staff understand the issues and procedures for attendance and punctuality.
- Clear procedures for enabling pupils to come to school.
- Attendance issues are addressed in the curriculum.
- Parents/carers and pupils having the opportunity to raise concerns and share in addressing those concerns.
- Allocating resources e.g. time, people, space to support the policy
- Identifying patterns of absence at an early stage, listening to and understanding barriers to attendance, and working with pupils and families to provide appropriate support.
- Ensuring parents/carers understand their legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance and the circumstances in which formal intervention or legal sanctions may be considered.

Each of these principles is explained in full detail in the following guidance.

Rights/Roles/ Responsibilities

Regular attendance at school is important for children's educational progress, wellbeing and wider development.

We believe that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the wider school community.

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure that the importance and value of good attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Ensure the school has a designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance.
- Annually review the school's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy.
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters.
- Monitor the school's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority and Department for Education as required and on time.
- Have clear systems in school to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.

A positive learning climate is essential for promoting good attendance.

The Headteacher will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Ensure that there is a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve.
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed annually.
- Ensure staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and are adequately trained to address attendance issues.
- Act as the school's designated senior leader for attendance and ensure sufficient time and resources are allocated to attendance.

- Return school attendance data to the Local Authority and Department for Education as required and on time.
- Report attendance and related issues regularly to the Governing Body, including patterns, trends, persistent and severe absence and actions being taken.
- Have systems in place to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site.
- Collate and analyse attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence.
- Interpret the data to develop solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions.
- Involve Education Welfare and develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families.
- Maintain appropriate records of attendance concerns, support, interventions and engagement with families, including records that may be required should formal intervention or legal action become necessary.

The office administrator is responsible for:

- Collating and recording registration and attendance information.
- Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence.
- Following the school's first-day absence procedures and contacting parents/carers promptly where a pupil is absent and the school has not received an explanation. Where contact cannot be established, or there are safeguarding concerns, escalating this promptly to the Headteacher/DSL.
- Recording details of children who arrive late or go home.
- Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Headteacher.
- Supporting the Headteacher with attendance communications and correspondence to parents/carers.

Teaching staff will:

- Actively promote the importance and value of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers.
- Contribute to a whole school approach which reinforces good school attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve. A positive learning climate is essential for promoting good attendance.
- Complete attendance registers accurately and promptly in accordance with school procedures.
- Be alert to patterns or changes in attendance and punctuality and report concerns promptly to the Headteacher.

- Listen to pupils and families and share relevant information that may help the school understand barriers to attendance.
- Work with the Headteacher, other staff and external professionals, where appropriate, to support pupils experiencing barriers to regular attendance.
- Be alert to the safeguarding implications of absence from school and follow the school's safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.

Parents/Carers will:

- Talk to their child about school and what goes on there. Take a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress.
- Instil the value of education and regular school attendance within the home.
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations.
- Contact the school by 9.15am on the first day of absence, providing the reason for absence and, where possible, the expected date of return.
- Avoid unnecessary absences. Wherever possible make appointments for the Doctors, Dentists etc. outside of school hours.
- Ask the school for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the school of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance.
- Support the school; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with school and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both school and home.
- Encourage routine at home, for example, bedtimes, homework, preparing school bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off school to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family.
- Avoid requesting leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Ensure the school has up-to-date contact information, including more than one emergency contact wherever possible.

Legal Framework

Under the requirements of Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 ("the 1996 Act") it is the duty of a parent to ensure that every child of compulsory school age receives efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs or additional learning needs they may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A child reaches compulsory school age on the prescribed day following their fifth birthday (or on their fifth birthday where this falls on a prescribed day). The prescribed days are 31st December, 31st March and 31st August. A child continues to be of compulsory school age until the last Friday in June in the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under the 1996 Act, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents secure education for children of compulsory school age and where necessary and appropriate, consider and use legal enforcement. This responsibility is undertaken locally by Northumberland County Council, including through its Education Welfare arrangements.

The school takes the attendance register at the start of each morning session and once during each afternoon session. On each occasion, the appropriate national attendance or absence code will be recorded for every registered pupil in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Categorising absence

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

The school will establish the reason for a pupil's absence and record the appropriate national attendance or absence code in accordance with the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Parents/carers should contact the school by 9.15am on the first day of absence, giving the reason for the absence and, where possible, the expected date of return. Parents/carers should continue to keep the school informed where an absence continues.

Absence will usually be categorised as set out below, however, this is not an exhaustive list and should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation and statutory guidance (for example - The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 / [Working together to improve school attendance](#)

Illness

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because of illness, including physical or mental health-related illness, parents/carers should notify the school on the first day of absence. In most cases, a parent's/carer's notification that their child is too ill to attend school will be sufficient. Where the school has genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of illness, further information or evidence may be requested.

Medical/Dental Appointments

Parents/carers are encouraged, wherever possible, to arrange routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours. Where this is not possible, pupils should attend school for as much of the school day as reasonably possible. The school may ask for confirmation of the appointment where appropriate.

Leave of Absence in Exceptional Circumstances

Requests for leave of absence should be made in advance. The Headteacher will consider each request individually and may grant leave where they consider there to be exceptional circumstances. The duration of any leave granted will be determined by the school.

Religious Observance

The school recognises the multi-faith nature of British society and respects the religious beliefs and practices of pupils and their families. Absence will be authorised where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which a parent of the pupil belongs. Parents/carers are asked to notify the school in advance wherever possible.

Traveller Absence

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils are among the lowest achieving groups of pupils at every key stage in education, although some GRT pupils achieve very well at school. We recognise that there are many complex and interwoven factors that may influence the educational attainment of GRT pupils. At our school, we have high expectations of all pupils, regardless of their background whilst recognising the lifestyle and cultural traditions of GRT communities. In line with The Education Act 1996, Section 444(6) the school will authorise the absence of a pupil who is a mobile child^[1] and is unable to attend school because:

- the parent is engaged in a trade or business of such a nature as to require him to travel from place to place,
- that the child has attended at a school as a registered pupil as regularly as the nature of that trade or business permits, and
- if the child has attained the age of six, that he has made at least 200 attendances during the period of 12 months ending with the date on which the proceedings were instituted.

This provision applies *only* when the family has no fixed abode and are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits. In these circumstances, parents have a duty to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When a family is trading or otherwise conducting their business in or around Northumberland, if a family can reasonably travel back to their base school (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time. Otterburn Primary School and Nursery will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when he or she is not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended Otterburn Primary School and Nursery in the last 18 months. Parents can register their children at other schools temporarily while away from their base school; in such cases, the pupils' school place at Otterburn Primary School and Nursery will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

To ensure we can effectively support all our pupils, we ask that parents:

- Advise the school of their forthcoming travelling patterns as soon as these are known and before they happen; and inform the school regarding proposed return.

Late Arrival

Registration begins at 8.45am, pupils arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late. (L) The register will close at 9.15am (no more than thirty minutes after the opening of the register) pupils arriving after the close of register will be recorded as late after registration (U), this will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

On arrival after the close of register, pupils must immediately report to the school office to ensure that we can be responsible for their health and safety whilst they are in school.

Absence will only be **authorised** if a satisfactory explanation for the late arrival can be provided, for example, evidence of attendance at a medical appointment.

The absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** if the pupil has arrived late without justifiable cause, for example, if they woke up late or were waiting for their uniform to dry.

Unauthorised Absence

Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation and that it has been accepted as such by the school.

Examples of unsatisfactory explanations include:

- A pupil's/family member's birthday
- Shopping for uniforms/shoes
- Having hair cut
- Closure of a sibling's school for training day (or other) purposes
- Illness where the child is considered well enough to attend school
- Leave of Absence taken without the authorisation of school

Deletions from the Register

- Any deletions from the Register will be in accordance with Regulation 9 of The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024,

Using Attendance Data

Pupil's attendance will be monitored and may be shared with the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Indicators next to a pupil's name will show if their attendance has, stayed the same, improved or deteriorated. This pupil level data will be used to trigger school action as set out in the escalation of intervention (see Appendix 1).

Attendance data will also be used to identify emerging patterns and trends to inform whole school/partnership strategies to improve attendance and attainment.

We will share attendance data with the Department for Education and the local authority as required.

All information will be shared in accordance with current data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Communication with Parents/Carers

The school is committed to open, timely and supportive communication with parents/carers about attendance. Where attendance begins to cause concern, we will make contact at an early stage to share information, listen to the family's perspective and seek to understand any barriers to regular attendance.

Communication may include telephone calls, emails, letters and meetings, depending on the circumstances. The emphasis will be on working in partnership with families, agreeing appropriate support and keeping parents/carers informed of attendance patterns, actions and next steps. Formal attendance procedures will be used where necessary, but wherever possible these will sit alongside continued communication and support.

Persistent and Severe Absence

A pupil is defined by the Government as a '**persistent absentee**' (**PA**) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for any reason; this can be authorised or unauthorised absence. Over a full academic year this would be 19 school days (38 sessions) missed. Absence at this level will cause considerable damage to any pupil's education and we need the full support and co-operation of parents to resolve this.

A pupil who has missed 50% or more schooling is defined by the Government as '**severely absent**' (**SA**). Pupils within this cohort may find it more difficult to be in school or face bigger barriers to their regular attendance and, as such, are likely to need more intensive support.

The attendance of all pupils at our school is monitored to identify children who are PA, or are on track to becoming PA. Where emerging concerns are identified we will instigate appropriate and timely interventions as outlined in our policy. Referrals may also be made to external agencies for targeted support

Support Systems

Schools recognise that poor attendance is often a sign that there are more serious issues going on in a child's life. This may be linked to problems at home and or in school. Parents/carers should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance and or behaviour in school, for example, bereavement, divorce/separation, incidents of domestic abuse. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

We also recognise that some pupils are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, those pupils with special educational needs, those with physical or mental health needs, migrant and refugee pupils and looked after children.

Where anxiety, mental health needs or emotionally based barriers affect attendance, the school will work sensitively with the pupil and their family to understand the barriers, identify appropriate adjustments and support and, where appropriate, involve relevant external professionals. Our aim will be to support the pupil to access education safely and successfully, with plans reviewed according to individual need.

Where a pupil has a chronic or long-term medical condition that affects attendance, the school will work with the family and, where appropriate, health professionals and other agencies to understand the pupil's needs, make reasonable adjustments and plan appropriate support for attendance, access to learning and reintegration following periods of absence.

The school will implement strategies to support improved attendance. Strategies used will include:

- Discussion with parents and pupils
- Attendance panels/ School Attendance Contracts (see Appendix 2)
- Attendance report cards
- Referrals to support agencies
- Learning mentors
- Pupil Voice Activities
- Friendship group
- PSHE
- Family learning
- Reward systems
- Time limited part time timetables
- Additional learning support
- Behaviour support
- Reintegration support packages
- Support offered to families will be child centred and planned in discussion and agreement with both parents/carers and pupils.
- Where parents/carers fail or refuse to engage with the support offered and further unauthorised absence occurs, we will refer to Education Welfare and the use of legal sanctions will be considered

Promoting and Recognising Good Attendance

Otterburn Primary School and Nursery promotes good attendance positively and consistently because regular attendance supports pupils' learning, wellbeing, relationships and wider development. We recognise and celebrate positive attendance in ways that are inclusive and appropriate to individual circumstances.

Recognition will focus not only on high attendance but also, where appropriate, on improved attendance, punctuality, engagement and individual progress. We will ensure that pupils are

not disadvantaged or made to feel responsible for absence that is linked to illness, disability, medical needs or other circumstances outside their control.

Positive messages about attendance will be shared with pupils and families through day-to-day conversations, school communications and appropriate recognition in school. This positive approach sits alongside the graduated support and intervention set out in Appendix 1.

Legal Sanctions

Where intervention by school and the Education Welfare Team fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, enforcement will be considered. A referral may be made to the Local Authority for enforcement action as appropriate. Parents do need to realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at school and most importantly about returning children to education.

Enforcement action may include (but is not limited to):

- (a) the issue of a **Penalty Notice**, (*see below for further information relating to Penalty Notices*) which would require payment of a sum of **£80** (if paid **within 21 days** from receipt of the Notice), or **£160** (if paid **after 21 days** and **before 28 days** from the date of receipt);
- (b) **prosecution** in the Magistrates' Court for an **offence** under section 444 of the 1996 Act, for which the penalties on conviction are:
 - (i) a fine of up to **£1,000** for an offence under section 444(1); or
 - (ii) a fine of up to **£2,500** for an offence under section 444(1A) **and/or** a **custodial sentence** of up to **3 months**
- (c) an application to the Magistrates' Court for a **Parenting Order** of up to **3 months** should the Local Authority be successful in a prosecution under Section 444;
- (d) an application under section 36 of the Children Act 1989 for an **Education Supervision Order** to authorise the Council to take responsibility for advising, assisting and giving directions to you and the Child to secure that the Child is properly educated.

Penalty notices may be issued to a parent as an alternative to prosecution for irregular school attendance under Section 444 of the 1996 Act.

Penalty Notices

There is now a single consistent national threshold for when a Penalty Notice must be considered by all schools in England, of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period. The 10 sessions of absence do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence (G, O and/or U coded within the school's registers). The 10-school week period can span different terms, school years or education settings.

- Sanctions may include issuing each parent (for each child) with a Penalty Notice which would require payment of a sum of **£80** (if paid **within 21 days** from receipt of the Notice), or **£160** (if paid **after 21 days** and **before 28 days** from the date of receipt).
- A **second Penalty Notice** issued within a three-year period will result in a fine of **£160** per parent, per child.
- A third Penalty Notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within three years of the date of issue of the first. Where the national threshold is met for a third or subsequent time within that period, alternative action will be considered, which may include prosecution.

As stated above if prosecution is instigated for irregular school attendance, the penalties on conviction are:

- (i) a fine of up to **£1,000** for an offence under section 444(1); or
- (ii) a fine of up to **£2,500** for an offence under section 444(1A) **and/or** a **custodial sentence** of up to **3 months**.

Penalty Notices will be issued in accordance with Northumberland County Council's Code of Conduct.

There is no entitlement in law for pupils to take time off during the term to go on holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure or recreation, or to take part in protest activity in school hours. In addition, the Supreme Court has ruled that the definition of regular school attendance is "in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school."

Should a penalty notice be issued, it should be noted that this is a direct alternative to prosecution, non-payment of the penalty notice may lead to a prosecution under section 444 of the 1996 Act

Statutory Framework

This policy has been devised with assistance from the Education Welfare Team. Relevant legislation and statutory guidance have also been considered.

- Working together to improve school attendance, DfE (updated July 2026)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Children missing education: statutory guidance for local authorities and schools, DfE (September 2025)
- Keeping children safe in education, DfE (September 2026)
- Working together to safeguard children, DfE (March 2026)

Appendix 1

PROMOTING GOOD ATTENDANCE

% Attendance	Key Person	Action(s)	Support Entitlement
100% -98%	Class Teacher	- Encourage attendance - Ensure all absence is followed up. - First-day absence procedures followed - Accurate and consistent marking of registers	Positive attendance encouraged and recognised appropriately
98% -95%	Class Teacher and Headteacher	- Encourage positive attendance - Remind pupils of attendance targets - Inform Headteacher of any deteriorating attendance patterns and follow up. - Contact parent/carers	Continued school support
95% -93%	Headteacher	- Contact parent/carers - Interview pupil - Letter home and/or arrange a meeting with parent/carers - Agree attendance plan/contract	Support for pupils in school
92% -91%	Headteacher	- Letter home-Review action plan - Meet with pupil and parent/carers - Where there are reasonable grounds for concern about repeated absence attributed to illness, discuss with parents/carers whether further information or evidence may be required.	- Discussion at a pupil meeting as appropriate. - Early Help and/or other appropriate support where required
90% and below	Headteacher	- Letter home advising referral to Education Welfare (EW) - EW case work undertaken - LA Action including: - Warning Notice - Penalty Notice - Education Supervision Order - Prosecution	Continued support from school/EWO and pupil support and other agencies where appropriate

Appendix 2

OTTERBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL AND NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE CONTRACT

Name of child:	DOB: AGE: School Year Group:
Home Address:	
School: Address:	
Parent/Carer (1):	
Parent/Carer (2):	

CONTRACT:

For your child to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that he/she attends regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly.

WHY REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS IMPORTANT

Any absence affects the pattern of your child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Where your child is of compulsory school age, ensuring their regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility.

UNDERSTANDING ABSENCE

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (NOT BY THE PARENTS), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason, such as emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school after registration has closed.
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents, and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is not acceptable to cover up his/her absence or to give in to pressure to excuse him/her from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse. Where a child's attendance is affected by persistent or repeated illness, the school will work with parents/carers to understand the circumstances and support the child's attendance. Where there are reasonable grounds for concern, the school may request further information or evidence.

PROCEDURES

If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact the school as soon as possible, and by 9.15am on the first day of absence, explaining the reason for the absence and, where possible, the expected date of return.
- Continue to keep the school informed where an absence continues.
- Ensure that the school has up-to-date contact details so that we can contact you where necessary.

If your child's attendance deteriorates, we will:

- Write to you.
- Invite you into school if absences persist to discuss the situation with the appropriate staff.
- Refer you to the Education Welfare Service.

CONTACT DETAILS

There are times when the school and Education Welfare need to contact you about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact details at all times. Help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed.

Parents/Carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, Education Welfare will become involved. The service will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve your child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, then sanctions such as Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court will be used. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the Education Welfare Service/ Local Authority.

LATENESS

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day, he/she can miss work and time with his/her class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

The school day starts at **8.45am** and we expect your child to be in class at that time. Class teachers take registers twice a day and your child will receive a late mark if he/she is not punctual.

In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after the close of registration, she will receive a mark that shows her to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark, and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.

If your child has a persistent late record, you will be asked to meet with staff in school to resolve the problem, but you can approach staff at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Leave of Absence in term time.

Any applications for leave must be made in advance and at the discretion of the Headteacher. In making a decision the Headteacher will consider the exceptional circumstances of each application individually, including any previous pattern of leave or absence in term time.

Full details of policy and procedures are available from the school.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

I have read and understood the terms and conditions of the School Attendance Contract.

Signed: _____ (Parent/Carer)

Signed: _____ (Headteacher, Otterburn Primary School)

Date: _____