



# Oughton Primary & Nursery School

## Week beginning 5th January 2023

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

I hope you all had a lovely Christmas. Happy New Year everyone!

### Attendance

Attendance is a concern at Oughton Primary and we expect children to attend regularly and be on time for school. In line with local authority regulations, the school closely monitors the attendance of all pupils at Oughton Primary. The expectation for attendance is for every child to attend 96% or above.

Where attendance drops, we inform you of your child's percentage and we aim to support you to improve their attendance. We are sending weekly ParentMails with this information to you if your child's attendance drops below 90% to keep you up to date.

At Oughton, we do not count irregular illness against a child's expected attendance in school. However, if a child is persistently absent with minor illnesses (colds, coughs, sickness, diarrhoea) or absent for a longer period of time, we may request medical evidence to allow us to authorise your child's time off of school. Medical evidence **will be requested** if a child's attendance drops below 90%. This can be a photo of medicine or an appointment with a doctor.

Last term, I met with our Attendance Officer and discussed the attendance of all children below 90%, as these children are deemed to be Persistent Absentees. A child can attend school with a common cold. If a child **often** has sickness or diarrhoea then we expect a Parent to be investigating the reasons for this and medical advice to be sought.

Holidays will not be authorised unless there is exceptional circumstances. Please do not book your holidays in term time. Penalty fines are given for holidays. Please ensure that you inform us if you intend to take a holiday. When a child is missing from school without a reason, we consider this to be a safeguarding issue and take action such as home visits, contacting Children's Services or the Police.

It's important to note that regular lateness also falls into this category as Parents choosing to send their child to a state school have a legal duty to ensure that their child arrives on time.

Where Parents fail to ensure that their child regularly attends school, a fixed-penalty notice may be given by the Local Authority. If the fine is not paid each Parent will be prosecuted for each child for the original offence of failing to secure regular attendance.

We regularly send out Attendance letters, where a child's attendance has dropped below 90% and we also send out regular texts to Parents requesting medical evidence. If you receive an attendance letter from the school and would like to discuss this with us, please get in touch, we are here to work with you. A letter is not always a suggestion that you are doing something wrong but more an alert that your child has already missed a significant amount of time off school and that this may impact on their educational outcomes.

Please ensure that you report a child who is absent each day via ParentMail. If we do not hear from you, we may conduct home visits and involve external agencies, often considering safeguarding. If we have not seen a child in over 5 days, we will conduct a home visit to check on your child. This is as a supportive measure and follows our procedures.

Thank you to those Parents who follow our procedures and keep us continually up to date regarding their child's attendance or illnesses. We appreciate this.

Please remember, we need children to be in school in order to improve their life chances. Every child is entitled to an education.

Yours sincerely

**Lisa Clayton**  
**Headteacher**

**Dates will be published on our school website:**

**[www.oughton.herts.sch.uk](http://www.oughton.herts.sch.uk)**  
**Dates**

**Thu 5th Jan** - Children return to school.  
**Thu 5th Jan** - Years 3 - 6 Panto Trip  
**12th Jan** - Year 3 Volcano workshop  
**24th Jan** - Year 4 Let's Celebrate Assembly at 2:50pm  
Week beginning **6th February**: Open evening for Parents.

### Staff Update

Mrs Mossman, who has been a cleaner at Oughton for over 25 years left at the end of last term. She is developing her role in her other job. We wished her well in our assembly on the last day of term.

Miss Ward has returned from her maternity leave and will be working across the school covering PPA for Teachers. Mrs Prosser will continue to teach in Nursery.

Great news, Mrs Jennings-Dawes had a baby boy just before Christmas and we look forward to meeting him.

### Online Safety

As more children will have been given electronic devices over the Christmas period, please ensure that you supervise the games and sites your children are accessing.

We have become more aware of children accessing sites well above their age range.

Just to remind you, WhatsApp requires a minimum age of 16, Instagram and Tiktok both have an age rating of 13+. Tiktok has a lot of inappropriate material and bad language.

Games such as Call of Duty should not be played by any of our children as it has an age rating of 18. Yet, we often hear conversations about this game between children.

Youtube also has a lot of inappropriate material on it and children should be supervised at all times.

A lack of supervision for children using technology leads to safeguarding concerns.