



Bhylls Acre Primary School

Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Policy agreed by staff: September 2022

Policy agreed by Governors: September 2022

Policy to be reviewed: September 2023

Principles

This policy provides a framework and guidance for staff and parents to encourage pupils to attend school regularly so that they can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available. When the children are in attendance at school, they will receive the highest quality education that will ensure they reach full potential. The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Regular school attendance is the key to enabling children and young people to maximise the educational opportunities available to them and become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their full potential and make a positive contribution to their community.

Good attendance means that children usually make good, consistent progress in their schoolwork. Bhylls Acre Primary School expects good attendance from its pupils, in order for them to make the most of the opportunities that the school has to offer. We rely on our partnership with parents to ensure that this is achieved. Promoting excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

Our children are praised for good attendance; we give certificates at the end of each term and school year for children whose attendance has been excellent.

All children should be in school on time, every day that school is open unless the reasons for absence is unavoidable.

Relationship to other Policies

This Policy should not be seen in isolation but is a strand that underpins all other policies related to the well-being of children including safeguarding, behaviour, bullying, and support for children with medical needs. It should be read in conjunction with the policies on Admissions, PSHE and school session times, and current guidance produced by the school for staff on the registration of pupils. The home-school agreement is also pertinent.

Our School Day

The doors are open at 8.40am. The bell is rung at 8.55 am and registers are marked shortly after this. Pupils who are not present for registration will be marked as absent initially – code 'N'. If they arrive before **9.10 am** this will be changed to late – code 'L', with the minutes late indicated within SIMS. If pupils arrive after **9.10 am**, this will be changed to 'U' indicating the pupil was late after registers closed, and the minutes indicated within SIMS.

The afternoon school session begins at 1.00 pm for Reception and KS1 children and 1.15pm for KS2 children, when again a register is taken of all pupils. Registers are legal documents and must be completed accurately. It is the duty of the Head Teacher to inform the LA of the names of those pupils who do not attend regularly or are absent for long period, and to include information on pupil's absences in the termly report to Governors.

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 each absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason i.e.

- Illness – attendance code I
- Medical or dental appointments which cannot be arranged outside school hours – attendance code M
- Days of religious observance (Only 2 days per year i.e. Eid) – attendance code R
- Visiting a prospective secondary school or attending an induction session at a secondary school – attendance code B
- Attending a family funeral, or birth of sibling - attendance code C

Unauthorised absences are those, which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given i.e.

- Keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy
- Staying at home to look after younger children or sick relatives
- Going shopping
- Any absence which the school has not been informed about, either by letter or telephone
- Any family holiday
- Coming into school after 9.10am

School Responsibilities:

We will promote positive behaviour and attendance through its use of curriculum and learning materials and will recognise good attendance appropriately.

We will work with parents to resolve problems which may affect a child's attendance and will involve representatives of other agencies that work with the school such as the School Nurse or representatives of the Local Support Team such as Education Welfare Workers where required in order to ensure all children can benefit from consistently good punctuality and attendance. We will use the Early Help Assessment process to support this.

We will be proactive in encouraging attendance for all pupils through ensuring parents and pupils receive information on the importance of good attendance and punctuality and will react swiftly to intervene to improve attendance of individual children should this become a concern.

The Headteacher will ensure that:

- Pupils are registered accurately and efficiently
- Attendance targets are set for individual pupils, classes and year groups
- Parents and carers are contacted when reasons for absence are unknown or unauthorised.
- Pupil attendance and lateness are monitored regularly
- The reward system for good attendance is implemented
- School attendance statistics are reported to the LA and governing body
- The LA officer is provided with registers of attendance and supported in following up long-term absences

- Pupils absent for long periods because of ill-health receive appropriate learning support
- The first day of absence phone call is implemented and where necessary followed up with appropriate support.

All teachers will:

- Register pupils accurately and efficiently – The list of codes to be used to indicate attendance and absence are taken from the Absence and Attendance Codes Guidance
- Report pupil attendance and lateness daily
- Encourage pupils to attend school regularly and inform colleagues if there is a problem that may lead to absences.

The Head Teacher and Governing Body will ensure that the Local Support Team is informed about long-term absence of any pupils.

Parents or Carers Responsibilities:

- Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly.
- Inform school straight away if your child cannot attend and give the reason.
- Try to make medical, dental or other appointments outside the school day
- Ensure the school is aware of any circumstances at home that may be likely to affect their attendance
- Encourage good routines at home which promote a healthy lifestyle including enough sleep
- Talk to your child about school and let the school know if your child is worried about any issues such as difficulties with homework or friendship problems.
- Do not book holidays in term time – this will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances
- Seek advice from your G.P. if you are not sure how long to keep your child off school with an illness
- Ensure school has all your up to date contact details.
- Encourage your child to enjoy school and make the most of all the opportunities available to them.

The importance of good attendance and its link to attainment:

A child's attendance at school is of paramount importance if he/she is to maximize the opportunities provided. Research suggests that children who are taken out of school may never catch up on the work they have missed. This could be particularly harmful if the child is working towards end of year assessments or in receipt of additional support. Therefore, extended absences from school, including holidays, will compromise learning and obviously, the longer the absence the more learning opportunities are missed.

The Department of Education has published research into the effect that missing time from school can have on chances of succeeding in tests and exams. February 22nd 2015 Department of Education). The research is based on data from all schools in England going back several years. The results are very clear – where pupils miss up to 14 days of school in key stage 2, they are a quarter less likely to achieve greater depth in reading, writing or maths tests than those with no absence.

The law states that parents **do not have the right** to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If the child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Parents are expected to contact the school at an early stage to work with the staff in resolving problems together. This is nearly always successful. If problems cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Worker from the Local Support Team. He/she will also try to resolve difficulties by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision order on the child. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWW themselves to ask their advice. They are independent of the school. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Support Team: 01902 506160

Procedures

School keeps an admission register which records the date that each child joined the school and their personal details including those of their parents and of their previous school.

All schools (including academies) must keep a record of attendance register entries for at least 3 years and inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register.

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 where they:

- Have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education (see below on home educated children)
- Have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- Have a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school
- Are in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- Have been permanently excluded.

Elective Home Education:

If school receives written notification from parents that they wish to home educate their child then we will inform the Local Authority via Entrust at enquiries@entrust-ed.co.uk of the decision to remove the child's name from the admissions register. Whilst school will not seek to prevent parents from choosing to electively home educate their child, neither will they seek to encourage them to do this – particularly as a way of avoiding exclusion or due to a poor attendance record.

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences.

Illness and other legitimate reasons

If a child is ill or cannot attend school for a particular reason, the parents/carers must telephone the school before 8.30am. This is recorded in the Absence Book. If a child remains off for a period of time, the parents/carers should continue to inform school of this, on the third and fifth day of absence. If a child is absent due to vomiting, they must remain off school for 48 hours from the time of the last sickness bout.

Other reasons for absence must be discussed with the school each time; notes will not necessarily be accepted as providing valid reasons. It is NOT usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may however, be granted in an emergency e.g. bereavement or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

Lateness

Children must attend on time to be given a mark for that session, unless the lateness is unavoidable. Parents are expected to ensure that children are present for registration. Late arrival after registration without good reason is counted as unauthorised absence. School starts at 8.55 am and punctuality is considered important. Any child arriving after 9.15 am will be marked as an unauthorised absence which will be shown on their annual report.

Arrangements for Monitoring and Evaluation

The Headteacher will:

- Monitor the levels of attendance and absence of every child in school on a termly basis.
- Identify children whose attendance level is between 90% and 80% and where appropriate contact parents to discuss the situation.
- Refer children, whose attendance level is less than 85%, to the Education Welfare Worker.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. This is accomplished each term when absence figures are published in the newsletter. If a child is not in regular attendance, he/she is being deprived of their right to full-time education. Equally parents have a responsibility to make sure their children attend.

School Specific Procedures related to:

- Notifying school that a child is absent and for what reason
- First day contact systems
- Registration times and procedures related to lateness – morning and afternoon registers need to close no more than 30 minutes after the start of sessions.
- Encouraging and recognising good attendance and punctuality
- Home school agreements
- Procedures for reporting to Governors regarding school attendance data, policy and procedures
- Roles and responsibilities within school of staff at all levels including accountabilities and performance management.
- Involving other agencies – the Local Authority must be informed of the absence of any child for a continuous period of 10 days or more without school's permission but school should involve the Local Support Team and take due

regard of safeguarding procedures where absence of a particular child is less than 10 days but presents a cause for concern.

- Responsibilities and arrangements for information sharing, safeguarding and complaints procedures if an alternative external agency is used by the school to support pupil attendance
- Medical or dental appointments
- Leave of absence during term time
- Monitoring and analysis of attendance data to ensure appropriate action is in place to encourage good punctuality and attendance for all pupils including vulnerable groups.
- Roles of key staff in school
- Useful Contact Details
- Use of Local Authority Fixed Penalty Protocol as a parental measure to improve pupil attendance in accordance with the Department of Education [School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures Statutory Guidance January 2015](#)

Legal Framework:

- The Education Act 1996;
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and amendments 2010, 2011 and 2013
- The Education (School Day and School Year) (England) Regulations 1999;
- The Education Act 2002; and The Changing of School Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011.;
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998;
- The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003;
- The Education Act 2005;
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007;
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 and amendments; and
- The Education and Skills Act 2008.
- The Equality Act 2010