



St Barnabas and St Philip's CE Primary School

Attendance policy

Approved by	Achievement and Curriculum Committee
Date	Autumn 2021
Date for Review	Autumn 2022

Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. School procedures	3
4. Authorised and unauthorised absence	4
5. Strategies for promoting attendance	5
6. Attendance monitoring	5
7. Roles and responsibilities	6
8. Monitoring arrangements	6
9. Links with other policies	6
Appendix 1: attendance codes.....	7

1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. The school will work in partnership to ensure that parents are supported in fulfilling their legal responsibility. These expectations are clearly explained to parents throughout their child's time at the school, including Reception New Starters meetings, annual 'meet the staff' meetings and regular parental consultations.

Clear guidance and training is provided to staff to ensure that school registers are kept properly and are regularly monitored by the DSL and Headteacher, who has overall responsibility for attendance and punctuality throughout the school.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

Present

Attending an approved off-site educational activity

Absent

Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

The original entry

The amended entry

The reason for the amendment

The date on which the amendment was made

The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

- Registers are opened at **8.55 a.m.**
- registers are not called after **9.05 a.m.** and registers are closed by the Class Teacher
- pupils arriving between **9.05 a.m. and 9.25 a.m.** are marked as late ('L') and the number of minutes late is recorded using the 'minutes late' feature within SIMs attendance module
- after 9.25 a.m.** marked with a 'U' (Late after register closed and an electronic note attached with circumstances and number of minutes late).

3.2 Unplanned absence

In the case of illness, parents are asked to telephone the school before 9:25 a.m. on the first day of absence and follow-up with a covering letter on the child's return. The teaching staff are encouraged to take up any concerns regarding unexplained absences with the Headteacher or DSL. Should there be no explanation for an absence the DSL or Headteacher is informed so that the appropriate follow-up can take place.

When pupils are off school due to prolonged illness the school liaises with parents as to the individual child's progress and, where appropriate, will provide work.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide 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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents 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.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4. Parents are required to give the school advanced notice of absence using the school's 'Application for leave of absence during term time' form.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

If a child is absent without explanation, parents will be contacted by the school's Administrative Officer on the first day of absence and a note made against the child's name using the 'comments' feature within the SIMS attendance module. Notes of explanations for absences are monitored by the Headteacher and the school's EWO and are followed up if they are not satisfactory, or when absence persists, parents will be invited into school to discuss any difficulties that may prevent a pupil from attending.

All letters, telephone calls and medical certificates relating attendance and punctuality issues are dated, named and initialed by the staff member who receives them. These notes are kept in the child's individual school file, as they may be required in legal proceedings.

We endeavor to provide an environment where parents can discuss any issues surrounding their child's attendance and punctuality. The ethos of the school is such that attendance is seen as being very important and that the functioning of a class is diminished by a pupil's absence or persistent lateness.

4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3

Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

The following guidance has been issued to parents regarding leave of absence during term time.

The governors are keen to ensure that all children regularly attend school.

- all requests for authorised absence during term time will continue to be considered sympathetically and on their own merits but will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

If you are considering making a request for time away from school for your child it is important to contact Mrs Vagic or Mrs Papalouka as early as possible to discuss the circumstances of your request. Any absences not agreed with the school will be recorded as unauthorised and will be discussed with the Educational Welfare Service and may result in your child losing their place at the school.

Family holiday term time leave of absence

Parents must appreciate that absence from school has been shown to have a negative effect on pupil's achievement and attitudes and as such, the school will not authorise absences arising from family holidays.

The Headteacher will not consider authorised absence for holidays.

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

The school is aware that on occasion, despite its best efforts legal action may have to be considered where a pupil's attendance or punctuality continues to be of concern. Before instigating any legal action, the EWS would carefully consider the appropriateness of legal action and any decision will be guided by the legal enforcement policies of the EWS and the Local Authority.

5. Strategies for promoting attendance

Attendance and punctuality achievement awards are presented at the first whole school worship of the academic year (for the previous academic year's attendance and punctuality achievements) and at the beginning of the spring and summer terms (for the previous terms attendance and punctuality achievements). A record of these pupils achievements are kept on the school file.

Year to date attendance and punctuality data is provided to parents during Academic Reviews information sheet.

6. Attendance monitoring

The attendance officer monitors pupil absence on a monthly basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2). The parents are expected to call the school each day a child is ill and give update.

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

The school uses the SIMs attendance module to generate ongoing attendance and punctuality data, including whole school year to date attendance and absence figures. The school also tracks attendance and punctuality data by year group, SEN (broken down into SEN and EHCP), boys and girls, EAL, FSM, PP, pupils with high/persistently absence >10%, patterns of absence for particular days or times of the year e.g. Mondays & Fridays or immediately before and after school holidays,

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.3 The attendance officer

The attendance officer:

Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level

Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher

Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system and to call parents to check and get information about absences.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher and SLT. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: 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	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day