

Bollington St John's Church of England Primary School



Where talent grows

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Aims

Attendance is a key factor in a child's education and we strive to achieve the highest possible rates. Continuity and progression are fundamental factors in our curriculum that support our ability to provide the highest possible standards of education. Failing to attend school regularly impedes progression and can have a major impact on young people's education, their future and their life chances.

This policy operates in conjunction with our safeguarding policy and aims to:

- encourage good attendance patterns and punctuality
- monitor the attendance of our children carefully
- encourage an active dialogue with parents
- maintain our attendance registers carefully in accordance with Local Authority guidelines
- discourage late arrivals
- support our duty of care to pupils

Most people would think that 94% attendance sounds very good. 94% achieved in any other aspect of school, and life in general, would be outstanding. However, closer inspection shows that 94% attendance is actually a concern. It adds up to a large amount of work missed and means that continuity of learning is very difficult, if not impossible.

We follow Cheshire East Guidelines:

Attendance of 95.5+% is very good attendance.

Attendance between 95.5% and 95% is good.

Attendance below 95% is a concern.

All our parents have been informed of this by newsletter and home contact. Evidence from across the country shows that students of all abilities under-perform greatly as their attendance drops towards 90%. Any attendance below that causes even greater learning difficulties.

Registration

Each teaching group uses SIMS to record the daily attendance. Children's names are listed alphabetically with date of birth. Registration takes place at the beginning of both morning and afternoon sessions. We will actively discourage late arrivals and will be alert to patterns which could be grounds for prosecution. Registration is at 8.55 am. The Secretary of State recommends that closure of the register should be no longer than thirty minutes after the opening. If a child arrives between 8.55 am and 9.25 am a late mark will be recorded. After 9.25am the register will be closed and an unauthorised absence will be registered. If a child accumulates more than 10 unauthorised marks then the school may request authority to issue a fixed penalty notice. If a child is absent but the parents have not contacted the school, the school administrator must contact the parent as soon as possible to obtain information concerning the absence.

Lateness

Parents of children who are late (arriving in class after 8.55am) must sign their child's name and arrival time in the school late book. If a child is late after the close of the register then an unauthorised absence mark will be recorded. If more than ten unauthorised marks accumulate during the academic year then school may request authority to issue a fixed penalty notice. If a child is late on 5% or more occasions during a half-term a letter is sent to parents to ensure they are aware of the situation and offering support to remedy the situation. If a child is late on 5% or more occasions during the consecutive half-term a letter is sent to parents requesting they make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss the situation.

Absence

Parents must notify the school as soon as possible if a child is absent. School will contact parents when a child's attendance begins to fall and reserves the right to request a doctor's letter regarding recurring and frequent illness. We will inform parents about their child's attendance rate at the end of the year with their formal school report.

When a child has to attend an appointment with an external agency (eg a medical appointment), parents must inform the school before the day of the appointment. Please note pupil absence will not be authorised for external agency appointments of parents or siblings.

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence during Term time

Amendments were made to the 2006 regulations in the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013**. These amendments came into force on 1 September 2013.

The amendments remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that

headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

For exceptional circumstances, we request that an appointment is made with the Headteacher where you will have an opportunity to explain why the circumstance of the absence is considered exceptional and must be taken during term time.

Unauthorised absence is when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's absence from school after a parent's request. Regularly keeping your child off school with minor ailments is not acceptable and may result in the absence being unauthorised.

If more than ten unauthorised absence marks accumulate then a letter will be sent from the Headteacher to parents asking for an explanation of the circumstances of the absences. This will be followed up by a meeting between parents and the Headteacher to discuss the absences. The Headteacher may then request authority to issue a fixed penalty notice.

Persistent unauthorised absenteeism may result in the Headteacher (or other authorised officer) issuing an Education-related Penalty Notice. These apply to any parent who fails to ensure the regular attendance of their child of compulsory school age (5-16) who is registered at a state school or fails to ensure that their excluded child is not found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason.

These currently stand at £60 for those who pay within 21 days; and £120 for those who pay within 28 days.

If a child's attendance/punctuality causes concern the school may request the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer. The EWO regularly checks register returns. Should the EWO wish to discuss attendance/absence with parents the school will support requests made to it.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

We aim to develop an atmosphere of encouragement and support and it is our intention that all our children, regardless of ability, race, gender and disabilities, will be given equal access to opportunities to develop a positive attitude to good attendance at school.

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

We assess our attendance on a regular basis and regularly reinforce our ethos in newsletters.

We report individual attendance figures in our termly report to governors and will also inform parents. Whole school figures are reported in the School Evaluation Form and the summer term headteacher report.

For further advice relating to this version of the Attendance Policy please see the DfE Advice on School Attendance document which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance>

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