



# Attendance Policy

Canon Burrows C of E Primary School

April 2023

## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Children are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have and we will endeavour to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures to support regular attendance. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children.

1.2 There is a relationship between attendance of pupils and their development, attainment and progress.

1.3 The school is committed to promoting excellent attendance as part of its dedication to ensure quality educational provision to give its pupils the best start in life.

1.4 The Education Act 1996 states that:

S.576: "Meaning of "parent". In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, "parent", in relation to a child or young person, includes any person— (a) who is not a parent of them but who has parental responsibility for them, or (b) who has care of them."

S.7: "Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age. The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable— (a) to their age, ability and aptitude, and (b) to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise."

S.444: "Offence: failure to secure regular attendance at school of registered pupil. If a child of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence."

1.5 The responsibility for giving strategic direction to attendance is led by the governing body. This will include monitoring, reporting, reviewing and planning for attendance, developing a policy, promoting an ethos of good attendance and setting any targets.

1.6 A governor will be appointed to lead on attendance, who will have regular contact with school as part of the monitoring and review process.

1.7 The Head of School and senior leadership team will ensure that the governing body's objectives are met by the effective management of attendance and report to the governing body in relation to this. Managing attendance will include: evaluating whole school data, surfacing trends, and attendance of defined groups, to enable planning of possible interventions; and considering individual cases of concern, to determine any appropriate interventions.

1.8 School staff are responsible to ensure they promote the school's ethos, set an example of attendance and punctuality, enable the school to keep accurate records of attendance for individual students.

1.9 Parents/Carers have responsibility to ensure their children attend school regularly and punctually.

1.10 Pupils have the responsibility to be on time for lessons and ready to learn.

1.11 The purpose of this policy is to inform all members of our school communities of the following:

- How the school encourages and enables good attendance
- How the school monitors and reviews attendance
- How the school monitors punctuality and lateness
- What counts as authorised and unauthorised absence
- The procedures for leave of absence in term time
- Why attendance and punctuality matter

The school will do this by sharing the Policy with all new parents/carers and by publishing the policy on the school website.

## **2. ENCOURAGING AND ENABLING EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE**

2.1 The most vital part of encouraging excellent attendance is to ensure that the school is a place to which the children want to come: that the school is a place where the children are treated with respect and feel valued; that the children are made in the image of God and treated as special, precious and unique; a place where their needs are recognised and are being addressed; a place where all children have the right to develop morally, spiritually, academically and physically to their full potential and can experience success within a rich, relevant and diversified curriculum.

2.2 It is clear that children alone cannot ensure their regular and punctual attendance at school. From the outset, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the work of the School and to build and support their children's enthusiasm for attending school.

2.3 All staff make children aware of the importance of excellent attendance and children are praised.

2.4 Each child's attendance record is shared with the parents as part of annual written reports and at Parent Consultations. It follows that individual records of attendance are kept on file and are passed onto subsequent schools.

## **3. MONITORING AND REVIEWING ATTENDANCE**

3.1 The school will consider annually, in accordance with its support needs in relation to attendance, whether it wishes to purchase a Traded Service in respect of an Education Welfare Officer (or similar provision).

3.2 The school may make a log of conversations with parents about attendance to assist in the monitoring of attendance and the offering of support. Appropriate internal systems may be utilised to facilitate this (e.g. SIMS, CPOMS, securely-stored handwritten notes, and secure communication systems, such as Egress and e-mail).

3.3 By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil. The school will ensure that its staff receive appropriate training and support to appropriately use attendance codes in line with DfE guidance and best practice.

3.4 To enable the appropriate coding of attendance or the authorisation of absence, the school will request additional information or evidence, eg. in relation to medical appointments or illness. (Medical evidence may include: an appointment letter, a GP appointment card signed / stamped by a receptionist, a prescription, prescribed medication.)

3.5 Regular checks on attendance are carried out by all class teachers. The Attendance Registers are marked twice each day, at the start of the morning session and again in the afternoon. Registers are checked by Administrative Staff.

3.6 All absences and persistent lateness are investigated. When the register closes, the Administrative Staff check the messages and operate 'first day calling procedures' for those pupils absent with no reason given. Appendix 1 'First Day Calling procedures' outlines this process.

3.7 Attendance data is held electronically on separate SIMS Management Information System, accessible by the Executive Head teacher and Administrative Staff who are able to conduct spot checks on individual children and provide comprehensive attendance records.

3.8 The school Attendance Officer and Welfare and Attendance Lead will monitor the attendance of pupils on an ongoing basis. Each week, registration certificates for pupils whose absence has fallen below 98% will be reviewed by the Welfare and Attendance Lead and reasons for absence explored. The Welfare and Attendance lead will contact parents/carers to discuss absences which have fallen below 98% and explain the impact of missing lessons to parents/carers.

3.9 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and Governors. Targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years, the school strive to set targets that are at least in line with National.

#### **4. PUNCTUALITY AND LATENESS**

4.1 The school considers that monitoring punctuality and lateness is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time, where they are welcomed at the main entrance gates and go straight to class.

There is no supervision on site for children before this time and the school is not legally responsible for them.

4.2 The school day ordinarily starts between 8.45 a.m. (nursery) and 8.55 a.m. (Year 1-6) depending upon which class(es) pupils are in. Registration closes in the morning at 9.15 a.m. and in the afternoon between 1.15 and 1.45 p.m. to allow for staggered lunch patterns. A pupil that arrives after this time will be marked as 'late' (unless the school have previously acknowledged the reason for their late arrival into school) and the number of minutes that they are late will be recorded.

School closes ordinarily at 3.10pm.

School opening and closing times are published and communicated via the school website and weekly school newsletter. During times of exceptional circumstance, staggered opening and closing times may apply and are subject to review and change but will be communicated in advance to parents/carers.

4.3 Where there are concerns about punctuality, the school will make verbal contact with parents/carers. If the concerns persist, the school will provide the parents/carers with a copy of the child's registration certificate, stating the total minutes late over a determined period.

4.4 If there is no improvement, the school will arrange a meeting with the parent/carer. In the event of persistent lateness, the school may make a formal referral to relevant support services.

Lateness of 5 minutes each school day equates to lost teaching and learning time of 16 hours and 15 minutes during each academic year. This alone can lead to significant gaps in your child's knowledge and hinder their attainment and progress, therefore it is essential that they are in school and ready to learn on time, every day.

4.5 The school Attendance Officer and Welfare and Attendance Lead will monitor punctuality and lateness of pupils on an ongoing basis. Each week, registration certificates for pupils regularly or persistently late, or whose cumulative lateness is causing concern, will be reviewed by the Learning Mentor and reasons for the lateness explored. The Welfare and Attendance Lead will contact parents/carers to discuss the impact of missing teaching and learning time.

## **5. AUTHORISED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCES**

5.1 The DfE recognises the importance of regular attendance and it is a requirement for school to decide with every absence whether it is authorised or unauthorised. The final decision is made by the Headteacher.

5.2 Parents are expected to avoid making routine appointments (e.g. medical, dental) during school time, as this also leads to lost teaching and learning time. Where possible, please try to make appointments for before/after school, at weekends or during school holidays.

5.3 If a child is absent from school, parents/carers are expected to inform the school (in person, in writing, by telephone, by text or by e-mail) by 9.15am at the latest. The reason for absence must be clearly stated by the parent/carer on each day of absence. If an absence reason is not provided, then it will be recorded as unauthorised absence.

5.4 Unauthorised absences are those absences for which the school is unable to provide authorisation in line with regulations, if the school has received no reason/explanation from the parent/carer, or if the school has good reason to doubt the explanation given.

## **6. LEAVE OF ABSENCE IN TERM TIME**

6.1 The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013. Head teachers may not grant any Leave of Absence during term time unless they consider there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.

6.2 Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time.

6.3 Any application for leave must establish that there are exceptional circumstances and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.

6.4 Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.

6.5 The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent, i.e., the parent with whom the child normally resides.

6.6 Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance using Appendix 2 'Application for leave of absence during term time'. Failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

6.7 Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as "unauthorised". This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.

6.8 All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Education Welfare Service and other relevant statutory support services where necessary.

6.9 If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Tameside Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

6.10 It is important to note, Fixed Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 notices each).

## **7. WHY ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY MATTERS**

Across one school year:

- Less than 5 days absence = 97.3% attendance
- 14 days absence (approx.) = 92.6% attendance
- 20 days absence (approx.) = 89.4% attendance
- 30 days absence (approx.) = 84.2% attendance

If a child achieves 80% attendance this means that they have missed approximately 39 days of education over the academic year, averaging 1 day per week.

## **8. CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

8.1 Where a pupil has 10 consecutive school days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by the school to establish their whereabouts without success, the school will make an immediate referral to statutory support services e.g. Education Welfare.

8.2 Reasonable steps to be taken by school staff include:

- Telephone calls to all known contacts (parents are asked to provide a minimum of two emergency contacts in the event of children not arriving at school without prior notification and also for other emergency purposes).
- Letters home (including recorded delivery)
- Contact with other schools where siblings may be registered
- Possible home visits
- Enquiries to friends, neighbours etc. through school contacts
- Enquiries with any other Service known to be involved with the pupil/family

8.3 All contacts and outcomes to be recorded on the pupil's file

## **9. IN CONCLUSION**

9.1 It is our belief that good attendance and punctuality is at the heart of a child's progress and is, therefore, fundamental to our school's success.

9.2 Canon Burrows C of E Primary School greatly appreciates parental support to reduce the total amount of days lost due to holidays. The School is committed to working in partnership with parents to enable all children to reach their academic potential and to support their social development and for this to happen individual attendance needs to be as high as possible and we all need to play our part.

**Signed:** .....

**Position:** .....

**Policy approved by Governors in April 2023**

**Policy review due April 2024.**

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **First Day Calling Procedures** **Canon Burrows CE Primary School**

1. Registers processed
2. Late children are recorded on the system (including the number of minutes that they are late)
3. Absence calls listened to, attendance text messages and e-mail inbox checked. If no message received continue to stage 4.
4. First day text sent to priority 1 on the contact list asking for reason for absence.
5. If no response to text within 15 minutes start calling contacts listed.
6. Ring those listed on the contact list until a reply is received, ensuring where possible that someone from outside of the family home has been contacted.
7. Alert the Headteacher that this child is absent and no contact has been made.
8. If no reply, send second text to first and second contacts on the list. If no response within 15 minutes continue to stage 9.
9. Home visit made if possible/appropriate by school or other agencies involved.
10. Contact Police if all other stages have been completed and there is still no contact regarding the absent child.



## APPENDIX 2

### Application for leave of absence during Term Time Canon Burrows CE Primary School

From the 1st September 2013, the law gives no entitlement to parents/carers to take their child on holiday during term time. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. To avoid unnecessary upset please do not book holidays until you have had the completed reply slip below returned to you from school.

Parents/guardians may face legal action if a pupil is withdrawn from school without authorisation.

#### Section 1 – To be completed by Parent/Carer

Child's name: ..... Class: .....

Address: .....

First date of absence ...../...../.....

Last date of absence ...../...../.....

Date of return to school: ...../...../.....

I wish to apply for my child to be absent from school during the above dates. The exceptional circumstances are as follows;

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.....  
.....

I confirm that I have read and understood school's Attendance Policy prior to making this application

Signed :.....

Date: ...../...../.....

Please print name: ..... Relationship to child: .....

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#### Section 2 – To be completed by school and returned to the Parent/Carer

### Application for leave of absence during Term Time Canon Burrows CE Primary School

Child's name : ..... Class: .....

Attendance rate: .....% as at ...../...../.....

I wish to confirm that your application for ..... day(s) leave of absence for the above child during term time has been Authorised / Unauthorised.

Signed:..... Please type name: .....

Position: ..... Date:...../...../.....