



Barlborough Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY - “Attendance matters...”

Updated: January 2020

At Barlborough Primary School we believe that regular attendance is key to children achieving their full potential. In law every parent of a child of compulsory school age has a duty to ensure that their child attends full-time education (section 7 of the Education Act 1996). Full time education means attendance of 190 days, 380 sessions during the school year from 1st September to 31st August.

This policy has been developed using the DCSF guidelines on attendance, with guidance from the Education Welfare Service.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to support all pupils achieving their maximum attendance and will ensure the safety of all pupils by recording attendance and lateness. We work closely with other agencies such as the Education Welfare Service to promote attendance and to at least achieve our target of **97%** whole school attendance.

As a school we aim to:

- Maintain parents’ and pupils’ awareness of the importance of regular attendance.
- To raise attendance
- Improve punctuality
- To raise level of achievement
- Maximise opportunities both in school and in later life

School

- A register of attendance is kept at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. Computerised records of attendance will be checked on a weekly basis by the office staff.
- Attendance and absence will be recorded using the required codes, where possible this should be done electronically on the RM Integris system, supply teachers will be issued with a paper copy.
- Lateness will be recorded after the time of the register closing (9.10am).
- If the parents/carers do not make contact with the school by 10.00am then we will make contact by telephone to find out the reason for absence. The school may contact certain families earlier than this if they are being monitored or known to social care.
- Attendance of all children is monitored on a daily basis by the class teacher and office staff.
- Letters will be sent out if a pupil’s attendance falls below 90% or if regular patterns of absence are apparent. This will also be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) during attendance monitoring meetings with the Headteacher.
- Attendance is actively promoted throughout school and certificates are awarded for 100% attendance at the end of the year, and each week the children in the class with the highest attendance will get an extra star point, which equates to an extra minutes play time in the summer term.
- Attendance data will be recorded on Annual School Reports to parents.
- If a child arrives after 9.30am they will be marked as absent for the morning.
- A parent/carers must sign their child into school if they arrive after the close of the register.

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and poor attendance
- Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- Regular attenders find school routines and school work easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school



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As a parent you can help us by:

- Remembering it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that their child attends school regularly and is on time.
- Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and saying when the child will return – before 9.15am.
- Arranging dental and doctor's appointments out of school hours or during school breaks or on Friday afternoon after 2.00pm.
- Bringing your child to school before and returning them after a hospital or other medical appointment.
- Keeping us updated by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.
- Providing school with medical evidence if a child has a medical condition which affects their attendance. Parents with children whose attendance is consistently poor will be asked to provide medical evidence after 3 days of absence. That medical evidence being anything from a doctor or hospital appointment card, proof or prescription etc. Children being monitored due to poor attendance may be asked to provide medical evidence on the first day of absence.

School shall take various measures in order to safeguard children by:

- Following up unexplained absences after registration, with a text or phone call on the first morning.
- Reminding parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, and the Home-School agreement.
- Publishing our attendance rate in the school prospectus.
- Acknowledging and rewarding good attendance.
- Publishing your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.
- Letting you know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance.
- If we continue to have concerns make a referral to the School Educational Welfare Officer (EWO), who visits the school regularly to review and support attendance matters.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: if a child is ill, family bereavement, religious observance.

We realise that there are **rare** occasions when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. These are known as "unauthorised absences". Examples of unauthorised absence are:

- Waiting on a delivery
- Going for a family day out
- Sleeping in after a late night
- Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory.
- Parents are unwell
- Going shopping or for a hair cut
- Because it is your child's birthday
- Unapproved Holidays

Supporting such absences is against our school ethos

Unauthorised Absences have to be reported to the Local Authority. The School Attendance Service may contact you and consider taking legal action against you if your child has unauthorised absences.



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Punctuality

- KS1 children can come into school from 8.50am, KS2 are brought in at 8.55am. The school gate is open from 8.45am.
- It is important to be on time as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.
- If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child. We take the view there are no late children, only late parents.
- Arrival after the close of registration will be marked as unauthorised absence.
- We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.
- Children who remain uncollected at the end of school time will be referred to a place of safety if the school was not contacted by school closing time.

Lateness

- All children arriving after 9.10am **must be accompanied to the school office by the parent /carer**, where they will be asked to sign them in.
- Lateness is monitored regularly. Where children have persistent lateness problems the head will invite the parents into the school to a formal meeting.

Holidays and Term Time Leave of Absence

The school support the view that every lesson counts and discourages parents from taking holidays in term time. We are always concerned about the amount of school time pupils' miss as a result of family holidays. There is no entitlement to time off in term time. Leave of absence is only allowed at the discretion of the Head Teacher in accordance with the school policy as agreed by the Governing Body taking into consideration the amount of previous absence.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 state that Headteachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. These regulations also state that holidays cannot be authorised retrospectively. Any requests should be on an official school absence request form and handed into the school office for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. You may be issued with a Penalty Notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

The Government has recently made amendments to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 which come into force on 1st September 2013. These state that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances; in these cases. It is the Headteacher who determines the number of days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

It is our policy:

- That only in exceptional circumstances will holidays be allowed. The cheaper cost of holidays in term time is not an acceptable reason for an application. Just because a parent is off work it does not entitle them to take their child on holiday.
- Parents wishing to apply for leave of absence for term-time holidays must fill in an application form at least 2 weeks before the holiday is due to commence and before booking. Please ask the school office for a form; the head teacher will consider your request and then you will be notified of her decision, possibly asking to meet with you to discuss this.
- No holiday requests will be granted for children in year 2 and 6 during SAT's week even if circumstances are exceptional. Notification of the date will be given to parents as early as possible in the academic year. No requests will be granted for the first week of the academic year as it is important for children to be present for the 'settling in' period.
- If the school does not approve your request and you take your child on holiday, the absence will be unauthorised.
- Parents and carers should not assume that a holiday will be authorised just because a holiday request form has been submitted. The school secretary will make contact with the parent with the outcome after discussion with the headteacher.



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Parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the Education Welfare Service. Parents could be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

The fine is £120 to be paid within 28 days. The 28 days starts two days after the date of issue as shown on the notice. If the fine is paid within 21 days, payment reduces to £60.

PLEASE BE AWARE when two parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice for the same child both penalty notices must be paid. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly and punctually.

For example, in a family where there are two parents who fail to ensure proper attendance of their child, the fine would be £120 for each parent.

Where holiday requests are unauthorised by the headteacher – any appeals must be addressed to the Chair of the Governing body.

Please remember that the more time your child misses from school, the more difficult it is for them to catch up with their work. Valuable learning time is lost. A **good** understanding of the work can only take place when the pupil is in the classroom.

School outings / visits / residential trips.

Opportunities for children to attend these activities are provided. If they do not go, the children **are expected in school**, where alternative arrangements will be made for them.

Governors **will not authorise** absence if the child does not attend school during this time, unless there is a valid medical reason (*a bad cold is not acceptable*) or medical certificate provided or there are exceptional family circumstances.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school employs strategies to encourage good attendance.

- Each week, stars are awarded to the class with the highest attendance. These are displayed in the office area. The number of stars achieved means the more reward time children receive.
- The headteacher presents 100% attendance awards in the summer term.

Procedures

- Registers of all classes are kept and monitored by staff daily
- EWO has regular meetings with the headteacher to discuss attendance.
- Log kept of children who arrive late
- Log kept of all children daily for whom no notification for absence has been made and of phone calls made
- Log kept of phone calls received from parents and reasons given.

We value your support in helping us to maintain high standards.

“Every day counts