

# Burradon Community Primary School



## Attendance and Punctuality Policy



**September 2025**

**Miss Hunter  
Mrs Noor**

## **1. Introduction**

All children of compulsory school age have the right to an efficient full-time education, regardless of age, aptitude, ability and any special needs she/he may have. Regular school attendance is essential if a child is to make the most of the educational opportunity available to them. Burradon Community Primary takes seriously its responsibility to monitor and promote the regular attendance of all its pupils. It acknowledges that irregular attendance seriously disrupts continuity of learning, undermines educational progress, can lead to underachievement and low attainment and impedes the child's ability to develop friendship groups within school.

## **2. Aims**

We are committed to meeting our obligation about school attendance through our whole school approach that values good school attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance;
- Ensuring every child has access to full-time education;
- Building and maintaining a strong relationship with families to enable targeted support to better school attendance;
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence;
- Acting early to address patterns of absence;
- Promoting the importance of arriving to school and lessons on time to support punctuality.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governing Board of Trustees**

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos;
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data;
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school;
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance;
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

### **The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school;
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors;
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils;
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies;
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **The designated senior leader responsible for attendance**

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school;

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement;
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes;
- Having an oversight of data analysis;
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues;
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families.

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Miss Hunter (Headteacher).

### **The Headteacher and Office Manager**

The Headteacher and Office Manager are responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data;
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher;
- Working with relevant school staff to tackle persistent absence;
- Advising the Headteacher (authorised by the Headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

### **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. This is completed through our electronic register system on Arbor and must be finalised by 9am (morning) and by 1:10pm/1:20pm (afternoon)

### **School office] staff**

School office staff will:

- Take calls, School Comms messages and emails from parents / carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system;
- Take messages / transfer calls from parents / carers to the Headteacher (or senior lead in the absence of the Headteacher) to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

### **Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time;
- Call and/or message the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the first day of the absence, providing reasons for the absence and advising when they are expected to return;
- Provide the school with at least 3 emergency contact numbers for their child;
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day;
- Ensure their child is in the correct uniform and has all their equipment, including PE kits.

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time;
- Ensure that they are in the correct uniform and have all their equipment, including PE kits.

### **Local Authority**

Another key partner engaged in working towards excellent attendance in education is North Tyneside Local Authority.

The Local Authority has a responsibility to provide education and promote regular attendance of all statutory school age children and to provide support to schools and parents to fulfil their legal duty. The Attendance & Placement Service is the enforcement agency of the Local Authority and as well as providing guidance and support through its officers may take action upon parents not fulfilling their duty under the Education act 1996.

Local Authority (LA) has a duty to satisfy themselves that children are in the school system or receiving education otherwise. If the LA believes that a child is not getting a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise than at a school, it has a duty under section 437 of the Education Act 1996 to serve a notice or a school attendance order on a parent. The notice requires the parent to satisfy the LA that the child is receiving a suitable education while the order requires the parent to register the child at a named school.

The LA also has responsibility under sections 444, 444A and 444ZA of the Education Act 1996 for legal action to enforce attendance at school. This duty would be exercised through The Attendance & Placement Service. They also have the following legal powers to enforce attendance:

- School Attendance Orders
- Prosecution in Magistrates Court (for irregular attendance)
- Penalty Notices (for irregular attendance, for unauthorised absence and term time holidays)
- Education Supervision Orders.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register 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

Ref: Appendix 1 for DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not;
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity;
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive at school by 8:50am on each school day. Gates close at 9am and any arrival after 9am must be through the school office.

The register for the first session will be taken between 8:50am and 9am and will be kept open until 9:30am. The register for the second session will be taken at between 1pm-1:10pm for EYFS and KS1 and 1:10pm and 1:20pm for KS2.

### **Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (in person or leaving a message on the sickness absence line), emailing the school or adding a message to School Comms.

We will mark absence due to illness as 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 the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or another appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

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

### **Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments outside of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents/carers must notify the school office of any medical or dental appointments by calling the school office, emailing the school or adding a message to School Comms.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence.

### **Lateness and Punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code;
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code;
- The school will use the [U] code for arrivals after 30 minutes from the start of the session.

### **Following up unexplained absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school will email the parent / carer through School Comms and/or school email.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not;
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session;
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider conducting a home visit and/or involving an education welfare officer

### **Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels. This will be completed through:

- Attendance certificates provided at parent/carer sessions;
- Half termly attendance certificates;
- Termly attendance certificates with a colour coded letter attached linked to our traffic light system;
- Phone calls where attendance is causing a concern;
- Meetings with parents / carers where attendance is causing a concern;
- Phone calls and letters linked to holidays during term time;
- Annual end of year reports.

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **Approval for term-time absence**

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' in line with the DfE 'Working together to improve school attendance 2024' extract below which states in paragraphs 37 and 38:

*Exceptional circumstances: All schools can grant a leave of absence for other exceptional circumstances at their discretion. In the case of schools maintained by local authorities and special schools not maintained by local authorities, it must be requested in advance by a parent who the pupil normally lives with. Schools are then expected to consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request. If a leave of absence is granted, it is for the school to determine the length of the time the pupil can be away from school. (Para 37)*

*Generally, the DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance. Leave of absence should not be granted for a pupil to take part in protest activity during school hours. (Para 38)*

In Burradon Community Primary School, exceptional circumstances could include:

1. Service personnel returning from a tour of duty abroad where it is evidenced the individual will not be in receipt of any leave in the near future that coincides with school holidays.
2. Where an absence from school is recommended by a health professional as part of a parent or child's rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue.
3. The death or terminal illness of a person close to the family.
4. To attend a wedding or funeral of a person close to the family.
5. Religious observance
6. Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances that fall outside of 1 to 5 above, the Headteacher will consult with the education welfare officer prior to any authorisation being given to the parent / carer.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. Evidence would be required in each case.

**If a request meets the above exceptional circumstances but falls within the following times, the Headteacher must be convinced that absence from school is the only option:**

- 1) The first half term of any academic year (applies to all pupils).
- 2) Year six transition day/week (for pupils in Year six).
- 3) Year six SATs week (for pupils in Year six).
- 4) At any time specified by the school (this will be communicated to parents / carers by each school).

If the Headteacher has any doubts their thoughts can be discussed with the Attendance & Placement Service for advice and guidance prior to informing parents/carers of their final decision. The Headteacher will keep a log of their decision making rationale.

Any request should be submitted in writing as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, before the absence begins. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for a leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments.
- 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.

### **Extended Leave**

When a child is absent from school for an extended period (i.e 15 school days or more) parent/carer should advise the school of the temporary address.

### **Legal sanctions**

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The 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 or withdraw the notice.

The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil is charged at a flat rate of £160 if paid within 28 days.
- A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action should be taken instead. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions.

A penalty notice may also be issued where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first 5 days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. These penalty notices are charged at £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

Class teachers will ensure that the curriculum is delivered within a culture of inclusion and in such a way that pupils feel that they have and can succeed. Individual pupils whose attendance has been a cause for concern will be encouraged to set and achieve personal attendance goals.

Weekly attendance is updated on our display board within the main school hall. 100% certificates are awarded for weekly class attendance, where achieved. Weekly attendance is also reported on the Headteacher's weekly newsletter which is sent to parents/carers on a Monday.

Pupil attendance figures will be published with the annual end of year reports. We use a traffic light system to colour code our attendance on a termly basis with letters sent home. In addition, class teachers can award prizes for attendance including improved attendance and punctuality.

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

### **Monitoring attendance**

The school will:

- Monitor attendance on a daily basis through the online attendance registers submitted to the school office;
- Monitor attendance on a weekly basis through the weekly data for classes and the cumulative attendance overviews for all pupils;
- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level;
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority levels through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

### **Analysing attendance**

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families;
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

### **Using data to improve attendance**

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families;
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

### **Reducing persistent and severe absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- Make phone calls to parents / carers where their child is persistently absent (red letter) or is in danger of becoming a persistently absent child;
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils whom the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school;
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by Miss Hunter, Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## **9. Support**

The school will:

- Build relationships with students and families to encourage regular school attendance;
- Analyse and use data and relationship knowledge to prevent regular absence;
- Using resources (School-based and external services) to intervene early with support;
- Use targeted support for persistent/severe absences.

## **10. Links with other policies**

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Children Missing in Education Policy

## **11. Legislation and guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2024](#)

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

- [Summary of responsibilities where a mental health issue is affecting attendance](#)
- [Support for pupils where mental health issues are affecting attendance \(Effective practice examples\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)

## **Appendix 1: attendance codes**

The following registration is effective from the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2024 - '[Working Together To Improve School Attendance 2024](#)'

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Definition</b>             | <b>Scenario</b>  |
|-------------|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>/</b>    | Present (am)                  | The pupil is present at morning registration   |
| <b>\</b>    | Present (pm)                  | The pupil is present at the afternoon registration   |
| <b>L</b>    | Late arrival                  | The pupil arrives late before the register has closed                                      |
| <b>B</b>    | Off-site educational activity | The pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school          |
| <b>K</b>    | Off-site educational activity | The pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the local authority |
| <b>D</b>    | Dual registered               | The pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered         |
| <b>P</b>    | Sporting activity             | The pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school        |
| <b>V</b>    | Educational trip or visit     | The pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school            |
| <b>W</b>    | Work experience               | The pupil is on a work experience placement  |

| Code                      | Definition                                   | Scenario   |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Authorised absence</b> |  |  |
| <b>C</b>                  | Authorised leave of absence                  | The pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances                   |
| <b>C1</b>                 | Leave of absence                             | The pupil should be participating in a regulated performance or regulated employment abroad      |
| <b>C2</b>                 | Leave of absence – Part-time timetable       | For compulsory school-age pupils who are on an agreed part-time timetable                        |
| <b>E</b>                  | Suspended or permanently excluded            | The pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made  |
| <b>I</b>                  | Illness                                      | The school has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness                          |
| <b>J1</b>                 | Leave of absence                             | Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/ admission to another educational institution |
| <b>M</b>                  | Medical/dental appointment                   | The pupil is at a medical or dental appointment  |
| <b>R</b>                  | Religious observance                         | Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance  |
| <b>S</b>                  | Study leave                                  | Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations                                 |
| <b>T</b>                  | Parents travelling for occupational purposes | The pupil is a mobile child due to the parent travelling from place to place for business/trade  |

|                             |  |  |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Q</b>                    | Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements                | The pupil is unable to attend due to a lack of travel arrangements made by the local authority   |
| <b>Y1</b>                   | Unable to attend due to lack of transport                          | Where the school or local authority normally provides transport which is not available; and the school is beyond reasonable walking distance |
| <b>Y2</b>                   | Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel            | The pupil is unable to attend school because of widespread disruption to travel caused by a local, national or international emergency       |
| <b>Y3</b>                   | Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed   | Part of the school premises is unavoidably out of use  |
| <b>Y4</b>                   | Unable to attend due to the whole school being unexpectedly closed | Where the whole school was planned to be open but remained closed unexpectedly   |
| <b>Y5</b>                   | Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention         | If the pupil is in police detention or on remand to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing  |
| <b>Y6</b>                   | Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law  | Pupil travel to or attendance at the school would be contrary to restrictions set by the secretary of state for health                       |
| <b>Y7</b>                   | Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause            | The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not the parent   |
| <b>Unauthorised absence</b> |  |  |
| <b>G</b>                    | Unauthorised holiday   | The pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school  |

|          |                            |   |
|----------|----------------------------|---|
| <b>N</b> | 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) |
| <b>O</b> | Unauthorised absence       | The school is not satisfied with the reason for the pupil's absence   |
| <b>U</b> | Arrival after registration | The pupil arrived late and after 30 minutes from the start of the session   |

| <b>Code</b> | <b>Definition</b>               | <b>Scenario</b>   |
|-------------|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>X</b>    | Not required to be in school    | Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend            |
| <b>Z</b>    | Pupil not on admission register | Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school                 |
| <b>#</b>    | Planned school closure          | Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day |