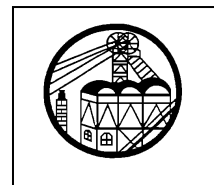


Burradon Community Primary School



Attendance and Punctuality Policy



September 2023
Miss Hunter
Mrs Noor

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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.

Aims

- To ensure that staff know the reasons for a child's authorised absences.
- To ensure that children with unauthorised absences are quickly identified.
- To ascertain why certain children have frequent absences, long periods of absence or a developing pattern of absence and to overcome the problem.
- To ensure that parents / carers and support agencies are alerted to any pupil lateness and absences which give cause for concern.

The policy will aim to raise and maintain levels of attendance by:

- promoting a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued.
- raising the awareness of the importance of a differentiated and relevant curriculum.
- promoting opportunities to celebrate and reward pupil's successes and achievements.
- raising awareness of the importance of good attendance.
- ensuring that attendance is monitored effectively and reasons for absences are recorded promptly and consistently.

Statements of Expectation

Pupils

Pupils have a responsibility to themselves and others to play a positive role in the life of the school and to make the most of the educational opportunities available.

What is expected of the pupils:

- To respect themselves and others.
- To do all they can to attend school regularly and on time.
- To inform a trusted adult if they feel that they are being bullied.
- To encourage friendship and a sense of belonging.
- To be happy and encourage others to feel happy.

Parents / Carers

Parents / carers have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually. They have a legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly and stay in school for every lesson after they have registered. Parents / carers should also make sure that the children arrive on time, properly dressed, with the right equipment and in a fit state to benefit from the education offered to them. Parents / carers may

be prosecuted if a child does not attend school regularly and punctually. This will be done under the 1996 Education Act and aims to ensure that parents carry out their duty to secure suitable education for their children.

If a child is in the care of foster parents or in a residential home, it is important that the carers recognise their parenting role where attendance to school is concerned. They will be supported by close co-operation between the school, Attendance & Placement Service and social services where such a child's attendance is irregular.

What is expected of the parents/carers:

- To keep requests for their child to be absent to a minimum.
- To offer a reason for any period of absence, preferably before the absence or on the first day of absence.
- To ensure that their child arrives at school on time, properly dressed, with the correct equipment and in a condition to learn. A reason should be offered for any lateness.
- To work closely with the school and the Attendance & Placement Service to resolve any problems that may impede a child's attendance.
- To take family holidays during school holiday periods and be aware that requests for holidays during term time will be unauthorised except in special/exceptional circumstances.
- To be aware of curriculum requirements and be especially vigilant with regard to attendance during important academic times such as SATS.
- To support their child and recognise their successes and achievements.

The School

The school will endeavour to provide an environment that is conducive in educating every individual pupil. School attendance and punctuality will be positively supported wherever possible and the promotion of good communication and co-operation between all parties involved will be paramount. The school has a statutory responsibility to record and monitor the punctuality and attendance of pupils for both the morning and afternoon sessions. A register of attendance has to be taken once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. The register has to record whether a pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off site or absent. If a pupil is absent the register must record whether the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

A late book is situated in the office and requires a parental reason when a child arrives late (after 9am) or is collected late (after 3:25pm for EYFS and after 3:30pm for KS1/KS2). This is monitored by our administration staff.

What is expected of the school:

- To create a school ethos that pupils want to be part of.
- To meet the legal requirements.
- To give a high priority to punctuality and attendance.
- To develop procedures that enable the school to identify, follow up and record unauthorised absence, patterns of absence and parent condoned absence with effective monitoring and intervention.
- To consistently record authorised and unauthorised absences within the guidance of the 1996 Education Act.
- To develop a range of effective strategies to follow up intermittent and long term absenteeism and promote good attendance.
- To encourage open communication channels between home and school.

- To develop procedures for the reintegration of long term absentees.
- To develop procedures leading to a formal referral to the Attendance & Placement Service.
- To adequately provide for pupils with difficulties, within the bounds of resources available, and ensure the appropriate delivery of the curriculum.

The 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 & term time holidays)
- Education Supervision Orders.

The Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days and £120 per parent, per child if paid after this date but within 28 days. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice could result in the Local Authority starting legal proceedings against you for the offence of failing to ensure your child's regular attendance at school.

Governors

Governors will receive information about attendance in school (no individual pupils will be named) in the headteacher's termly reports. Governors will agree annual targets for attendance with the School Development Partner.

School Procedures for recording and monitoring attendance

1. Registers will be kept accurately and will be closed at 9:30am in the morning. They will be closed at 1:10pm for EYFS / KS1 and 1:20pm for KS2.
2. All attendances are recorded manually in class and then entered electronically by the school administration team.
3. Authorised absence will be recorded in each class register by the administration team.
4. Parents / carers are encouraged to telephone, e mail or write a note explaining the absence of their child as unexplained absences give cause for concern and will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. This contact should be made by 10am and there is a dedicated line for parents / carers to leave a message.

5. Administration staff will inform staff of the absence reason by a written note on the attendance register.
6. Staff responsible for marking the attendance register will put the appropriate code.
7. School Administrator or Office Clerk will call parents the same day for an explanation if no absence information has been received by 10am.
8. Staff will inform the headteacher if anyone is absent for more than one week without a known reason and where frequent or patterns of absence occur.
9. Staff are to raise any concerns regarding attendance and punctuality of individual children with the Headteacher.
10. The headteacher will contact / meet parents / carers to discuss concerns about attendance or punctuality and to ask for an improvement.
11. If there is no improvement the Headteacher will contact the Attendance & Placement Team and decide whether a referral needs to be made.
12. Children who return to school after a long period of absence should be warmly welcomed and closely supported in the classroom to enable the transition period to be as smooth as possible.

Acceptable reasons for Absence

- The child is ill or is prevented from attending by unavoidable cause.
- The child is absent on days exclusively set apart for religious observance in their particular faith.
- The child is absent with permission under exceptional circumstances granted by the Headteacher.

A reason for a period of absence is always required. The school will contact parents / carers who have not offered a reason and after a three week process will mark the absence as unauthorised if no reason is provided.

Attendance Codes

A set of standard codes are used consistently within the register. These codes are input into the electronic register as required and are used to give depth of meaning to the register and provide statistical meaning to the absences.

Code School Meaning

/ Present (am)
 \ Present (pm)
 B Educated off site (Not dual registration)
 C Other authorised circumstances
 D Dual registration
 E Excluded
 G Family holiday (not agreed)
 H Family holiday (agreed)
 I Illness (not med/dental etc. appointments)
 J Interview
 L Late (before reg closed)
 M Medical/Dental appointments
 N No reason yet provided for absence
 O Unauthorised absence
 P Approved sporting activity
 R Religious observance
 S Study leave
 T Traveller absence

U Late(after registers closed)
V Educational visit or trip
W Work experience
X COVID-19 suspected (once confirmed becomes an I code until child returns)
Y Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances
DfE : School closed to pupils and staff

Monitoring

The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school strategically manage attendance issues. The Attendance & Placement Service will also have access to this information and will use the reports to support their role.

Requests for Leave of Absence

If a parent / carer wishes to request a period of leave they are required to write to the Headteacher. If the request is denied the school will inform the parent / carer of the reason by letter and the request will be noted in the electronic register. Leave of absence will not be offered to pupils for family holidays except under special/exceptional circumstances.

Special / Exceptional Circumstances

The DfE School Attendance guidance states that

‘Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher’s discretion.’

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.

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.

Strategies used to promote good attendance and punctuality

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.

Pupil attendance figures will be published with the annual academic reports. We have an attendance reward system in place which includes 100% attendance prizes for termly and annual full attendance.

Weekly punctuality prizes are awarded in our achievement assembly for good punctuality.

General Data Protection regulations (GDPR)

In line with GDPR (Data Protection) this information will be used within school, by the LA and by the DfE and their agents. The School has robust processes in place to ensure the confidentiality and all documentation and information will be kept securely in line with our Information Security Policy and Data Protection Policy. The information will be shredded after 3 academic years from the date it was processed.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [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](#)

Monitoring the Policy

The headteacher and Governing Body, in line with recommendations, will review the policy annually or sooner if required.

Conclusion

Through the consistent application of this policy we aim to ensure that children attend school punctually and regularly. This will support the early identification of children whose attendance is causing concern and steps quickly taken to remedy it. Children will then have full access to all teaching and learning and make consistent progress.