



Attendance Policy

It is the aim of Beechcroft Infants School that pupils should enjoy learning, experience success and realise their full potential.

The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure. All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

AIMS

- The school aims to improve attendance to ensure that it is at least 95% full attendance each year. The target for 2024-2025 is 95%.
- To maximise attendance of all children – thus supporting achievement in learning.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor, communicate and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents, carers and Education Welfare Officer/Single Point of Contact (EWO/SPOC) to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams.
- To support the safeguarding policy

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, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- Regular attenders find learning more enjoyable and satisfying
- Regular attenders settle into Future Schools more easily

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Parents and Carers

- To escort their child onto the school premises and take them to the classroom before 9am, or to the school office if arriving after 9am as the register will have closed for the morning session.
- To be aware of their legal responsibilities.
- To ensure that their child is not left in the classroom unsupervised before 8.45am.

- To ensure that their child arrives in class punctually and prepared for the school day.
- To ensure that they contact the school **daily** of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.
- To contact school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- To notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- To notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.
- To produce evidence for appointments and to arrange medical and dental appointments outside of school time whenever possible.

Governors

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy, make changes to the policy if deemed necessary.
- To monitor whole school attendance.

Headteacher The Headteacher is the Senior Lead for attendance

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality patterns.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies when attendance and / or punctuality is an issue.
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To arrange meeting with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.

The school attendance officers are responsible for:

- Conducting and recording the outcome of first day calls when a child doesn't arrive at school and when no reason has been received
- Checking the school's answer phone and taking messages from parents/carers about a pupil's absence
- Informing the safeguarding lead of any concerns relating to attendance/punctuality
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The main attendance officer is the School Business Manager who can be contacted via the school office or admin@beechcroft.swindon.sch.uk. Please note that if your child is unwell first point of contact should be by telephone.

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on SIMs.
- To respond promptly to any issue raised by Office Staff.

- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

Office Staff

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of SIMS.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary, as directed by the Headteacher.
- To contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Headteacher whether an absence is authorised, unauthorised or a Fixed Penalty Notice issued. Please note that we cannot authorise any holidays in termtime.
- Inform parents if we have concerns regarding their child's attendance and punctuality. Children with 90% attendance or less, whatever the reason for the absence, are classified as persistent absentees.
- To promote the use of the 'Absence Request Form' for any parents or carers requesting absence for their child.

Education Welfare Officer/Single Point of Contact

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.

Administration

- The school uses an ICT based Attendance Manager / SIMS to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.
- Registers are a vital legal document, and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

Absence

Lateness

- Pupils arriving at 9am or after must report to the School Office as the gates will have closed and their attendance will be recorded as Late (L).
- Children will be taken to their classes.
- Pupils arriving after 9.30am will be officially absent for the morning session and your child will be marked late with a 'U' as this is after the register has closed.
- This will be considered an unauthorised absence unless satisfactory reason is given, for example proof of a medical appointment.
- The school will phone parents by 10am in the event that children are absent without explanation from a parent/carer.

- Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss phonics and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day.

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence before 9.00am by way of telephone call to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence. Office staff will contact parents on the first day of absence if a reason for absence has not been given.
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Headteacher should be informed.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments.
- Whenever possible, parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

Term time absence

No absence will be granted during term time. Any absence taken, which has been applied for and declined, may result in a Penalty Notice being issued and subsequent fine of £80 (min) per parent for each child taken out of school will be incurred, (please note this amount increases should payment be made after the due date). Failure to pay the fine will result in Legal Proceedings carried out by Swindon Borough Council.

Reporting to parents and carers

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, and (where deemed necessary) lateness will be reported to these parent/carers at the end of the academic year and where there are concerns regarding persistent absence.

In order to give parents/carers a benchmark to their child's attendance to the impact upon their education, the attendance poster provided by Swindon will be used alongside this policy (Appendix 1).

Monitoring and evaluation

- Share attendance data daily through WONDE with the DfE and LA
- Attendance data will be collected termly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with: incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness; periods of extended absence; periods of unauthorised; and all children with attendance below 90%. This data will be discussed with the EWO/SPOC as part of the regular meetings.
- If concerns are raised by this analysis, the school will operate the graduated response, working alongside families in order to improve the attendance of their child(ren). This response is as follows:
- Work with Social Care, Police and Health as Attendance Partners

- Where required, put in place additional support and adjustments, such as home visits, an individual healthcare plan and if applicable, ensuring the provision outlined in the pupil's EHCP is accessed.
- Inform the pupil's social worker if there are any unexplained absences and if their name is to be deleted from the register.

Where a pupil reaches the threshold of 10 sessions (5 days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 week period, the school will consider whether a Penalty Notice is appropriate in individual circumstance.

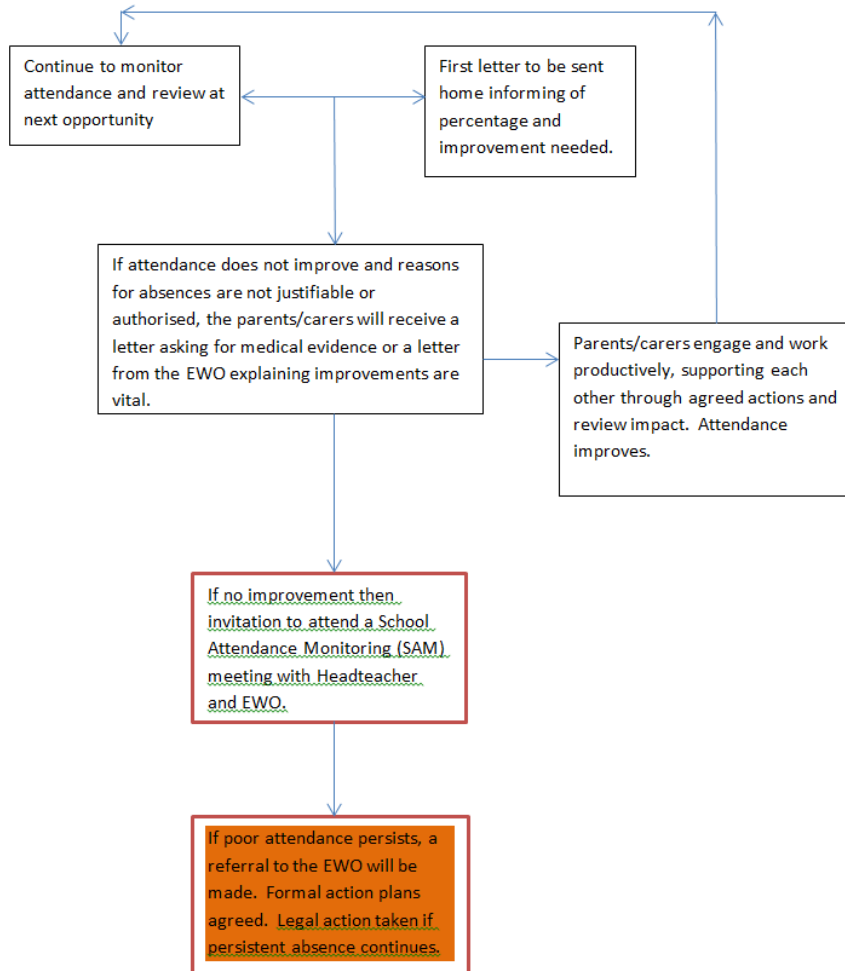
Attendance Cup

An Attendance Cup is issued to one class in every year group on a termly basis. This is awarded to the class in each year group who has had the highest percentage of attendance in the term. This is to encourage good attendance from every pupil.

Actions available (all actions to be put on CPOMS)

- Teachers talk to parents regarding any barriers to attendance.
- Attendance Officer to speak to parent.
- Attendance letter 1 sent home.
- Attendance letter 2 (medical evidence) sent home.
- Set targets with child & parent send Target letter outlining agreement.
- Meeting with Attendance Officer/ Children's Champion.
- Pastoral intervention.
- Early Help Record.
- Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised absence.
- Educational Welfare Officer letter.
- Educational Welfare Officer meeting.
- Communication with any external agencies involved with the child.

Beechcroft Infants School Attendance Graduated Response



Children who have persistent absence from school, suffer, not only from the days that they are away, but also struggle when they return:

- 'Chunks' of teaching and learning has been missed, meaning the child is constantly trying to play 'catch up' with their peers which can have an effect on their self-esteem and their personal desire to be at school.
- Friendship groups can be more difficult to sustain as children will ultimately form stronger bonds with those they see on a regular basis and there is the danger that children with persistent absence end up on the periphery of social groups, again reducing their desire to come to school.

As a school and for the benefit of the child we will always be:

- Extremely positive and 'up beat' about a child's return.
- Seek ways to support the child in catching up with work.
- Use positive role models in the class and group the children accordingly so that friendships can be fostered.
- Seek out responsible jobs that the child with persistent absence might be able to do. Giving ownership and a personal role within the school can lead to greater self-esteem and a willingness to be in, carrying out their specific job and being rewarded for doing so.

- The Headteacher and EWO/SPOC will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually.
- The Governors will review attendance every term.

Legislation and guidance

The Legal framework - There are legal obligations on:

- I. The parents/carers to secure education for their children, whether at school or otherwise, to send them to school regularly once they are on the register.
- II. The School to register attendance and notify the Local Authority of absence from school.
- III. The Local Authority to provide education and enforce attendance.
- IV. The Government, who expects schools and local authorities to:
 - Reduce absence, including persistent absence
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
 - Act early to address patterns of absence
 - Ensure parents perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age are registered at school and are punctual
 - Ensure all pupils are punctual to their lessons and attend school regularly

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](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

Legal sanctions

The Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

- If issued with 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

Children Missing from Education

All staff at Beechcroft are aware of the possible safeguarding risks of children missing from education and highlighted within the statutory guidance: '**Keeping Children Safe in Education.**' Staff receive training and regular updates regarding safeguarding including those children missing from education and carry out the following actions relating to this:

- A child will be reported to the Education Welfare Officer/Single Point of Contact following a period of five days absence without contact by the parent(s)
- If a child exceeds 10 days absence without contact from parents, they will be reported as missing in education to the Education Welfare Officer/Single Point of Contact.
- The school may take the child off roll following an absence of more than 20 school days if permission has not been obtained.

During this time, the school will make all continued efforts to contact family members or ascertain any details relating to the child(rens) attendance, keeping all relevant authorities fully informed. We also adhere to guidance from Swindon Borough Council.

Appendix 1

Parents and carers are reminded that an 'Absence Request Form' should be completed for a planned absence and submitted to the school office for the Headteacher's attention in advance.

Unauthorised absences may be referred to the Local Authority and Penalty Notices issued, followed by prosecution should the fine be unpaid. As a matter of course, recurring absences are required to be referred.

The procedure is the same for authorised absences, for medical or extra-curricular activities, such as music exams or auditions. These should be supported by copies of appointment letters or medical notes so that the absence can be authorised.

Frequently asked questions...

- **So is 90% attendance good?**
Any less than 95% and your child cannot do their best.
- **So what is poor attendance?**
Education Welfare Officers (EWO) work closely with school attendance and become very concerned at 90% and below, legal action may be taken in some cases.
- **What do these figures mean?**
95% attendance at the end of a school year means your child has been absent on 10 days. 90% attendance at the end of a school year means your child has been absent on 19 days. 85% attendance at the end of a school year means your child has been absent on 29 days.
- **What does 'persistent absence' mean?**
In simple terms any child that continues to have low attendance through the year will have persistent absence. The figure for persistent absence is less than 90% attendance.
- **What does 'genuine illness' mean?** High temperatures, diarrhoea and sickness, childhood ailments e.g. measles, tonsillitis are genuine illness. A child should not be kept home with minor coughs, tummy aches and headaches etc.
- **Can I take long weekends and odd days as holidays?** No. Too many Mondays and Fridays missed would not be good for achievement. You cannot request a holiday for a day out e.g. birthday treat.
- **What is an exceptional circumstance?** 'Exceptional' circumstances are much more likely to be unique and/or one-off situations e.g. where there has been a trauma or bereavement in the family. It is for the Headteacher to decide if the circumstance is 'exceptional'.
- **What does a 'penalty notice' mean?** The Local Authority can fine each parent £80 for each child. This means a family with two parents and two children could face a fine of £360 for unauthorised absence.
- **Can a fine be paid in instalments?** No – a fine must be paid in full or it will double. Failure to pay at all will lead to prosecution.

Remember: If you want your child to do his/her best they must be in school at least 95% of the time. (That means no more than 10 days absence in a school year).

Just a little bit late doesn't seem that much, but...

| He/she is only missing just... | That equals... | Which is... | and over 13 years of schooling that's... |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 10 minutes per day | 50 minutes per week | Nearly 1½ weeks per year | Nearly half a year |
| 20 minutes per day | 1 Hour 40 minutes per week | Only 2½ weeks per year | Nearly 1 year |
| Half an hour per day | Half a day per week | 4 weeks per year | Nearly 1.5 years |
| 1 hour per day | 1 day per week | 8 weeks per year | Over 2.5 years |

Beechcroft Infants School Absence Request Form

Due to recent Government amendments to DFE regulations regarding absence requests from parents. Please note that Headteachers are no longer permitted to authorise any leave of absence from school unless the circumstances are 'exceptional' relating to a 'one-off' isolated situation. Exceptional circumstances no longer cover:

- holidays of any description unless necessitated by work contracts (proof required)
- family birthday celebrations
- visiting relatives abroad

If the school refuses your request, and the child is still taken out of school an unauthorised absence will be recorded. These absences may result in a penalty notice being issued.

| | |
|--|--|
| Childs Name | |
| Class Number | |
| Start of Absence Date | |
| End of Absence Date | |
| Detailed reason for Absence | |
| Exceptional Circumstances (if any) – please continue on back | |
| Days Absent from School | |
| Signed Parent/Guardian | |
| Print Name | |
| Date | |

ABSENCE REQUEST – APPROVAL/REFUSAL – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEADTEACHER

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Current Attendance | |
| Attendance Last Year | |
| Any Previous Absences | |

ABSENCE REQUEST AUTHORISED UNAUTHORISED

Your request for absence during term time has been carefully considered and unfortunately it has not been possible to authorise it for the following reasons:

- The circumstances do not meet the criteria to qualify as 'exceptional'
- The proposed absence is during standard assessment tests
- The leave was not requested in advance
- The proposed absence is considered to be detrimental to your child's education because of the following:

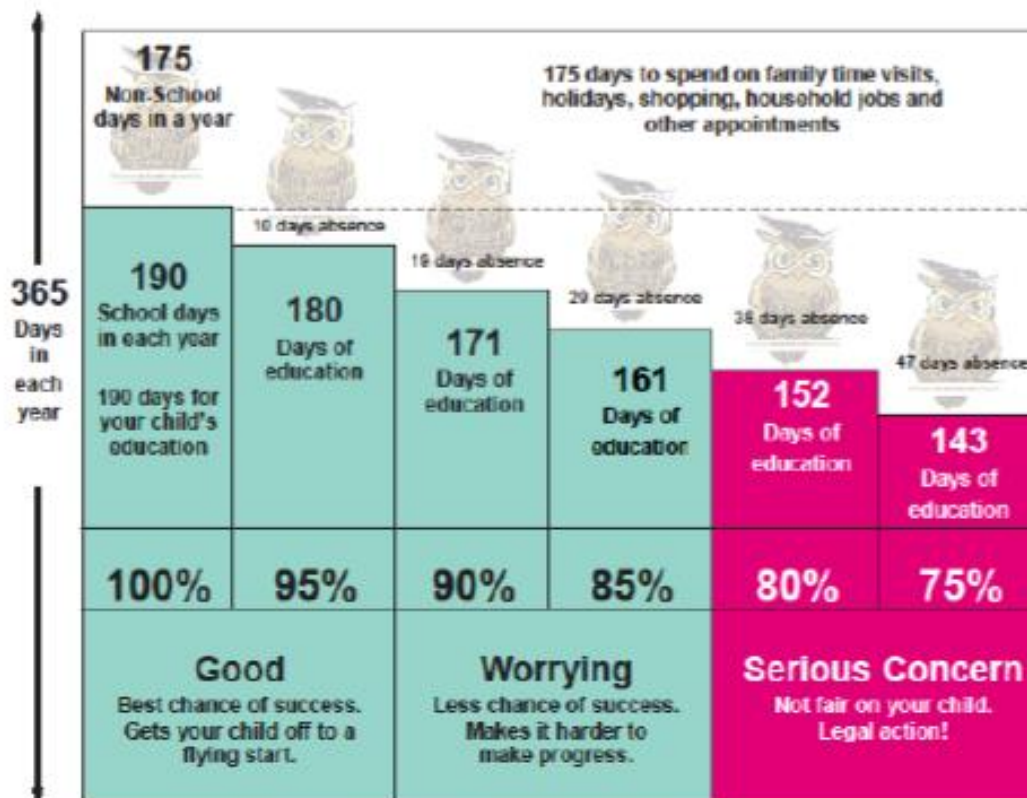
Signed: J Rutt (Headteacher) Date:

Date entered onto Sims.net:

Every school day counts!



- Days off school add up to lost learning.
- Please don't let your children miss out on the education they deserve.
- Every school day counts.



If you are worried about your child's attendance please talk to your school or contact CAF/TAC Admin on 01793 466408

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