



# Barton Clough Primary School

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## Attendance Policy

Date	Review Date	Coordinator	Nominated Governor
September 2021	September 2023	Simon Beswick	Sue Smith

### Introduction

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

### Why regular attendance is important

**Learning:** - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

**Safeguarding:** - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses:-

Attendance

Behaviour Management

Health and Safety

Access to the Curriculum

Anti-bullying

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting regular attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, pupils, and all members of staff.

**To help us all focus on this we will:**

- Report to you at least twice a year on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying class achievements;



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- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

## The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that *'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him/her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

- (a) To age, ability and aptitude and*
  - (b) to any special educational needs he/she may have*
- Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'*

## The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18

## Understanding types of attendance

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED OR UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the EWO's involvement and the potential for legal proceedings being initiated. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- truancy before or during the school day
- absences which have never been properly explained
- children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

Whilst a child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

## Persistent Absentee (PA)



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A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

## **Absence Procedures:**

### **If your child is absent you must:**

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence; a message can be left on the dedicated absence telephone line or the school's answering machine.
- You may call into the school office and report the absence to the office staff or leave a voicemail.

### **If your child is absent we will:**

- Phone you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you.
- Phone you on your second day of absence
- If your child is absent for 3 days or more without contact from a parent/ carer, we will ask the EWO / Executive Headteacher/ Assistant Headteacher to undertake a home visit.

**Refer the matter to the EWO if attendance moves below 90%.**

**If a child is on the provision map under 'safeguarding' the following will happen**

### **Day 1 – Phone call**

- If the parent has been contacted and there is an explanation for the absence which is sufficient, continue to monitor the attendance of the pupil.
- If the parent doesn't answer their phone, a discussion with either HWBO, Executive Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher will take place and a decision made about whether it would be appropriate to conduct a home visit or not.

### **Telephone numbers and email addresses**

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence, so we need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. We make regular checks on telephone numbers throughout the year.



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## Lateness

The school gates open at 8.30am and children can go into their classrooms from this time and read their reading book. From 8.45am the morning activities begin with the class teacher. The gates close at 8.55am. Anyone arriving after 8.55 is marked as late.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also lead to absence. **If punctuality is a concern, then you will be contacted by a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss how this can be improved. If punctuality fails to improve after this contact then it will be referred to the EWO.**

## Leave of absence

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

There is **no** automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday.

All applications for leave must be made in advance using the school's Holiday request form copies of which are available from the school office.

Following the September 2013 amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise leave in term time to allow pupils to go on holiday. Leave of absence **SHALL NOT** be granted unless the headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the **EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES** relating to the request.

## Additional Factors for Consideration

Pupils attend school for a maximum of 190 days each academic year. Regular attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. Trafford Local Authority expects that all parents ensure their children attend school whenever possible. Absence during school time is largely prohibited by regulation and hinders academic progress. Even in exceptional circumstances, the following factors may be taken into account when considering an application for leave:

- Will leave at this point in time be detrimental to the pupil's education?
- Will he/she miss any national tests or examinations?
- Is his/her attendance a cause for concern?
- Is the proposed absence during the month of September or any other transition period?
- Has he/she already had leave during term time this year?
- Did he/she have leave of absence which has been recorded as unauthorised this year?

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.



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## School targets, projects and special initiatives

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares.

Our target is to achieve better than this, however, because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our pupils can be amongst the best in the borough.

Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our Home – School newsletters and we ask for your full support.

## People responsible for attendance in school are –

Simon Beswick – Executive Headteacher

Jess Bennion – Assistant Headteacher

Gemma Yarwood – Office Manager

Jen Gribbon-Family Wellbeing Officer

## Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible and that every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

## Monitoring and review

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher, who will make an annual report to the Local Governing Body.

<b>Head of School:</b>	Simon Beswick	<b>Date:</b>	September 2021
<b>Chair of Governing Body:</b>	Sue Smith	<b>Date:</b>	September 2021



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