



Baslow St-Anne's C of E ATTENDANCE POLICY



Growing healthy minds and hearts together
"Life in all its fullness"



Version/ Issue	Date	Author	Reason for Change
1	April 2015	DCC/M Clark	
2	March 2016	DCC/M Clark	Updated from DCC
3	March 2019	DCC/M Clark	Updated procedures/values and vision

Approved by:

Mrs Marie Clark (Headteacher)

Chair of Governors: Tony Mottram

Principles and Values

At Baslow St. Anne's Church of England Primary School we believe that it is vitally important that everybody is safe, confident and happy in our school community. We aim to provide an environment in which our children feel safe, secure and confident, are respectful citizens in and out of school and nurture the Christian values that underpin all that we do. We believe that our children and staff should lead 'a life in all its fullness', nurturing our vision of growing healthy minds and hearts together. We strive to ensure this is in place to enable every child to achieve their full potential and be prepared for their next step in life.

1. Introduction and background

Baslow St. Anne's Church of England Primary School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to nurturing and embedding our Christian values, raising standards and pupil attainment.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- promote children's welfare and safeguarding;
- ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled;
- ensure that all pupils succeed to their very best whilst at school in preparation for Secondary School and ultimately adults in life
- promoting achieving excellence together

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, **on time**, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or later arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. It also can affect the child's confidence and self-esteem if they are late on a regular basis.

Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

2. Promoting Regular Attendance

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

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Set a school target in line with Government target
- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our newsletters and Governor newsletters
- Report to parents/carers annually on how their child's attendance by means of the annual school report.
- Make parents/carers aware should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance (96%)
- Incentives may be implemented and rewards to promote good attendance and promptness to school

- Include information about attendance in our newsletters and website.

3. Understanding types of absence:

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.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason. Good reasons are defined as:

- where the child is too ill to attend school*
- where medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time (parents should make every effort to make appointments out of school time)
- when the absence occurs on a day set aside for religious observance to which the parents/carers belong
- when there are extreme weather conditions and it is not safe or possible to travel to school
- when there has been a family bereavement – time absent at the discretion of the headteacher
- where the pupil lives more than 3 miles from school with no suitable transport, up to a maximum of five days with the authorisation of the Headteacher.

*Children who have a high level of illness throughout the year, and fall below the 96% attendance target may be referred to the school doctor or nurse in order to help with any health needs or issues that prevent the child from attending school.

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 Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- absences which have never been properly explained
- shopping
- looking after other children
- birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.
- extended weekends

Whilst any 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 a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school, then we will work with that family to understand the root problem.

4. Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss up to 15% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parent's fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. If the figure goes below 85% the matter can be referred to the Education Welfare Officer. This information may also be used when pupils' progress is tracked as absence affects attainment.

5. Absence Procedures:

- Class teachers record attendance on weekly registration sheet at the beginning of each session am and pm.
- Pupils arriving after 9.05 am will be recorded as 'L' - 'late before the closure of registers' and arrivals after 9.20 am will be recorded as 'U' - 'late after register closes'. If arriving after 8.55 am, parents must inform the school office to advise the reason.
- Parents must contact the school office before 8.55 am on the morning of any absence. We will contact the parent if no call is made as a 'response' action
- Written/verbal communication of the reason for child's absence will be required on the child's return to school.
- School will monitor attendance and punctuality. If attendance falls below 96% (school minimum target) or a pattern of lateness appears, the school clerk will alert the headteacher and provide a print out of the child's attendance. The headteacher will contact the parent to discuss the matter and sign the printout as evidence of discussion, retaining in the pupil's file.
- If poor attendance continues, or measures have not been taken to improve the situation, parents may be asked to attend an attendance panel held in school and /or the Educational Welfare Officer may be notified.

6. The Education Welfare Officer:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. He/she will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

7. Lateness:

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher preparing for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons; it can be embarrassing for the child, can lower self-esteem and confidence and can also encourage absence. Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world.

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 8.55am, however children are allowed into school between 8:45 and 8:55 as they arrive at school.
- Registers are marked and returned to the office by 9.05am and the child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.
- In accordance with the Regulations, if a child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark if after 9.20 am and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that the parent could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a child has a persistent late record the parent/s will be asked to meet with the Head Teacher to resolve the problem, but parents can approach us at any time if they are having problems getting their child to school on time.

We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children and celebrate good class punctuality.

8. Holidays in Term Time:

There is no entitlement for holidays and time off during term time.

The DFE expects schools to promote good attendance and reduce absences, especially holidays taken in term time. The Government has made amendments to the Education Regulations 2006 which came into force on 1st September 2013. These state that ***the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence for holidays during the term time unless there are exceptional circumstances:***

- A family holiday judged to be important to the wellbeing and cohesion of the family, following serious or terminal illness, bereavement or other traumatic events.
- Family wedding if the child is a bridesmaid/pageboy
- Factory closure
- Other exceptional cases will be considered, but lies at the discretion of the Headteacher and Governors to decide if authorised

In very exceptional circumstances, absence can be authorised using Code C (other authorised circumstances) or H (family holiday agreed). The Headteacher determines the number of days a child can be away from school if any leave is granted.

All applications for leave, including absence for exceptional circumstances, should be made by completing a request form for exceptional absence at least two weeks before the anticipated start date. The reason for request should be given in detail. Application should be made before the leave is arranged as absences will not be granted retrospectively.

This is Government policy and parents who take their child/children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These will remain on the child's record and will be monitored for further action by the school and Educational Welfare Service. All unauthorised absence will be referred to the Local Educational Authority and parents may be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

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The school's target for attendance is 96%, any child falling below this will have their attendance monitored and actions may be put into place.

This policy should be reviewed every three years.

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M Clark
Headteacher

April 2015
Reviewed March 2016
Reviewed March 2019

Adopted by Governors: _____

See attached appendix for Government guidance, parent letter and application form.