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	March 2019	DCC	Updated from DCC
2	March 2019	DCC	Updated procedures/values and vision
3	March 2022	DCC	
4 (Draft until FGB 25.3.24)	February 2024	DCC	Updated timings of the school day and lateness Added Appendix 1+ 2
5	February 2025	DCC	Updated with updated statutory guidance in place September 2024
6	October 2026	DCC	Change of CofG name

Approved by:
Mrs. Marie Clark (Headteacher)

Chair of Governors: Craig Radford

Principles and Values

V6 Baslow St. Anne's C of E Primary Attendance Policy

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 (but this should be for a very limited period of time e.g. 1 or 2 days)
- 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.
- School will open at 8:40-8:50 for the children to come into school
- 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. **Inclusion Support Advisory Service (ISAS)**

ISAS will support school with attendance.

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 **8.50am** and the children are allowed into school from **8:40am**
- Registers are marked and returned to the office by **8.55am** 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 **9:20am,** they will receive a late 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. Unauthorised absence of 5 days or more will be referred to the Local Educational Authority and parents may be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action. ***If unpaid, this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.***

The school's target for attendance is at a minimum of 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.



……..
M Clark
Headteacher

April 2015
Reviewed March 2016
Reviewed March 2019
Reviewed March 2022
Reviewed February 2024
Reviewed February 2025
Reviewed October 2026

Adopted by Governors: _____

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

Appendix 1 – Parent Leaflet Penalty Notices

PENALTY NOTICES

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Derbyshire County Council ***Children's Services***

ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

- **What is the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003?**

  The Act gives powers to local authorities, schools and the police to issue penalty notices to parents or carers for their child's non-attendance at school.

- **Why have penalty notices been introduced**?

  Reducing absence from school is very important. This is because missing school can damage children's achievements, disrupt the school's routines and affect other children's learning. It can also leave children at risk of anti-social behaviour and youth crime. Above all, missing out on the opportunities provided in school can have a long-term effect on children's chances in life.

- **What are my responsibilities as a parent**?

  You have a legal duty to ensure that your child receives full-time education[1]. Unless you can show that you are providing this yourself, you must ensure that your child attends school regularly and on time. You will be committing an offence, therefore, if your child fails to attend regularly and punctually and the school has not given permission for the absence or late arrival.

  ***Remember - only your child's school can authorise absence or late arrival*.**

  If you fail to make sure that your child attends regularly and punctually, you may be prosecuted in court. The penalties are severe and, in serious cases, may result in a prison sentence.

- **What is a penalty notice**?

  A penalty notice is an alternative to prosecution. It requires the parent to pay a fixed amount as a fine for their child's non-attendance and avoids court proceedings. It is intended to secure better attendance without taking legal action through the courts.

- **What are the penalty costs**?

  The fine is £120 to be paid within 28 days. The 28 days starts two days after the date of issue as shown on the notice. If the fine is paid within 21 days, payment reduces to £60.

  PLEASE BE AWARE when two parents/carers are issued with a penalty notice for the same child both penalty notices must be paid. The fine will apply to each parent for each child who fails to attend regularly and punctually.

  For example, in a family where there are two parents who fail to ensure proper attendance of their child, the fine would be £120 for each parent.

- **Who is counted as the parent responsible for ensuring attendance?**

  The law defines a parent as:

  - Any natural parent, whether married or not
  - Any parent who, even if not married, has responsibility as a parent

[1] The law states that education must be *"efficient, full-time and suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and to any special educational needs the child may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise (Section 7 of the Education Act 1996)"*

- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person

Having care of a child or young person means that if the child or young person lives with you and is cared for by you then you will be regarded as the parent irrespective of what your relationship is with the child.

- **How are they issued?**

A penalty notice will normally be sent by first class post to your home.

- **When are they used**?

Penalty notices can be used in a wide range of situations, including but not limited to circumstances:

- Where it is clear that parents fail to ensure their child attends school regularly and on time
- Where parents take their child on holiday during term-time without the written permission of the headteacher.

- **Is a warning given?**

A formal written warning will usually be given in the first circumstance, but there will be certain circumstances where you will not be given a formal written warning. For example, if you have taken your child on holiday in term-time without the authorisation of the headteacher.

- **What happens if I receive a warning letter?**

The warning letter will tell you how many school sessions your child has missed and give you a minimum of 15 school days to improve your child's attendance. If there is no significant improvement, a penalty notice will be issued.

We never take such action lightly and would prefer to work with parents or carers to improve attendance without having to enforce it. However, we will use these powers to ensure that your child attends school.

- **What does the law say regarding holidays in term-time?**

The law makes it clear that the headteacher should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term-time, including holidays, unless there are exceptional circumstances. [2]

Parents are not entitled to take their children on holiday in term-time. Such holidays can only be taken with the written approval of the headteacher. Each case will be considered on its own merits and the decision of the headteacher is final.

Please remember that holidays taken in term-time without the headteacher's approval may result in:

- Each parent receiving a penalty notice for each child for each period of absence
- A penalty notice will be issued regardless of the child's previous attendance
- A penalty notice will be issued without warning

Taking or allowing your child to take a holiday in term-time without the school's permission is a serious matter. If we find that you have done so, we will not hesitate to issue a penalty notice.

- **Can I appeal?**

There is no right of appeal once a penalty notice has been issued.

We can take back a penalty notice but **only if**:

- It should not have been issued in the first place (for example, if your child was actually at school); or
- It has been issued to the wrong person; or
- It appears to Derbyshire County Council that the notice contains material errors.

If you believe that any of the above circumstances apply, you should contact Derbyshire County Council immediately with evidence to support your view. The contact details will be included in the penalty notice.

- **How do I pay?**

Details of how to pay will be included in the penalty notice. Please remember that there will be no reminder to pay and no opportunity to pay in instalments. Failure to pay within the timescales as specified in the penalty notice will result in prosecution.

- **What happens if I do not pay?**

If you do not pay, the consequences can be very serious. You have up to 28 days from receipt to pay the penalty notice in full. After this time, if it has not been paid, Derbyshire County Council is required by law to begin proceedings in the magistrates' court for the original offence of poor attendance by your child.

[2] The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
If proven, this can attract a range of fines of up to £2500, and may include other remedies such as parenting orders, community sentences, or imprisonment, depending on the circumstances. A guilty verdict will also mean that you will have a criminal record.

All this can be avoided by payment in full by the due date.

- **Can I be prosecuted if I pay but my child still fails to attend school?**

You cannot be prosecuted for the period included in the penalty notice. However, you can be prosecuted for any further periods of non-attendance not covered by the penalty notice, depending on the circumstances.

Appendix 2 – Parent Letter

Dear >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

We are continuing to work hard to maintain a high level of attendance to ensure that your child avoids missing any part of their education and is punctual to school to build lifelong skills for when they become adults.

Our attendance data shows that >>>>>>> has fallen below our minimum percentage of 96% for the period from ******* to ****** and has a current attendance of ****% with ** lates.**

Why attendance matters:
I am required to make you aware of your legal responsibilities in relation to school attendance. Under Section 444 of The Education Act 1996 a parent is guilty of an offence if a child of compulsory school age, who is a registered pupil at a school, fails to attend regularly at the school.

Attending school on a regular basis is the key to your child doing well at school and will set them up with good routines for later life and the working world, as well as giving them the opportunity to:

- make new friends and feel included
- learn new things and develop skills

- increase their confidence and self-esteem
- improve social skills
- achieve their potential and fulfil aspirations

Every school day counts
Every single day a child is absent from school equates to a day of lost learning.

Attendance, absence and days of learning missed	
Attendance	Absence and days of learning missed
100% attendance	No days missed
95% attendance	9 days of absence, 1 week and 4 days of learning missed
90% attendance	19 days of absence, 3 weeks and 4 days of learning missed
85% attendance	28 days of absence, 5 weeks and 3 days of learning missed

Baslow St. Anne's Attendance Policy states:

'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 Inclusion Support Advisory Service from the Local Authority. They 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, sanctions such as penalty notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court may come into effect. 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 Local Authority 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.

Please do not hesitate to call or pop in if we can assist and support in this area. We are keen to work with you on this matter.

Kind regards



Mrs Marie Clark

Headteacher