



BIDDICK PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Here at Biddick Primary School, we value good attendance and punctuality; being in school on time every day gives your child the best possible chance of learning and making progress. Absence and lateness can cause gaps in learning and may mean that a child fails to get the best out of their time in school.

This policy has been written to promote good attendance in school. As a school we aim for high rates of attendance to help all children to achieve to their full potential and we recognise that this can only be achieved by maximising the number of sessions children attend school and do this by promoting regular attendance to our pupils and parents. We value parental support in helping us to maintain high standards.

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 and school work easier to cope with;
- Regular attenders find learning more satisfying;
- Regular attenders have an easier transfer to secondary school.

What we do:

Record attendance data at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions.

Keep records of phonecalls / letters explaining absences and a log of late arrivals.

Follow up unexplained absences with a phone call home as soon as possible.

Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality at Induction Meetings, in newsletters, on our website and in the Home-School Agreement.

Report our attendance rate in the Governing Body's Annual Report to Parents.

Acknowledge and reward good attendance through termly presentations in assembly by our Chair of Governors.

Publish your child's attendance rate on her/his annual school report.

Monitor attendance records and identify any concerns.

Let parents know if we have concerns regarding your child's attendance.

Use our Locality Attendance Officer to support and advise us in matters of attendance.

Follow Local Authority guidelines to deal with concerns about attendance.

Parents can help us by:

Ringing on the first morning of all absences with the reason and informing us of when the child is likely to return.

Arranging any medical appointments out of school hours or during school breaks.

Sending in a note explaining the reason for absence on your child's return to school after an illness.

Updating us by telephone or letter if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.

Arranging for children to take holidays during designated school closure times.

Ensuring that your child is on the yard, ready for the start of the school day at 8.55 a.m.

Authorised Absence

Some absences are allowed by law and are known as "authorised absences". For example: when a child is ill. We realise that there are **rare** occasions, when there might be a particular problem that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

There are times when children are absent for reasons, which are **not** permitted by law. Where there is no explanation for the absence or where the explanation or reason for the absence is considered unsatisfactory, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

Term Time Leave of Absence

From the 1st September 2013 DFE amended the regulations surrounding holidays in term time. The DFE removed references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. **Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time** unless there are exceptional circumstances and **parents have no entitlement to take their child on holiday during term time**. If you would like to request term time leave of absence, you must put this request in writing addressed to the Headteacher.

From 1st September 2014, the Local Authority may fine parents for failing to ensure their child attends school by issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice.

Punctuality

It is important for children to be on time, as the first few minutes of the school day are often used to give out instructions or organise schoolwork for the rest of the day.

If your child misses this short but vital session, their work for the whole day may be affected. Late arrivals are disruptive to the whole class and often embarrassing for your child.

Children will be marked as 'late' if they arrive after the close of registration.

We will let you know if we have concerns about your child's punctuality.

Leavers

If your child is leaving our school, other than at the end of Year 6 to go to Secondary School, parents are asked to give the school full information about their plans, including date of move, new address (if applicable), new school and proposed start date. The Headteacher will then complete a transfer form and send this to the local authority. These arrangements apply to transfer to Sunderland LA schools only. Arrangements will be different if your child is moving out of the authority. Please speak to us if you think that you may be moving out of authority and we will ensure that all appropriate records etc. are forwarded to your child's new school.

Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan or Looked After by the Local Authority

If a child is subject to a Child Protection Plan or identified as a Child in Need, attendance is carefully monitored and reported at Core Group Meetings.

If a child is Looked After by the Local Authority attendance is carefully monitored and reported at termly PEP meetings.

Pupils Who Attend Alternative Provision

If a child attends alternative provision for part of week, close links will be maintained between the two providers. The providers will inform each other of any absence. It is important that the parent contacts the school if their child is absent.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and you have not given us the above information, and cannot contact you, then your child is considered to be a **Child Missing Education**. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child. By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Legal Note

Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and full time attendance at school of registered pupils (Education Act 1996). This policy is based on the law and on Best Practice guidance produced by the Department for Education and Skills and the Local Authority. The LA Attendance Team aims to work with schools and families to promote good attendance and avoid legal action. However in some cases, parents are prosecuted (taken to court) or have to pay a Fixed Penalty (fine) if unauthorised absences continue.

Headteacher's Signature: _____

Chair of Governor's Signature: _____

Status of Policy

Policy reviewed
Agreed by Staff
Agreed by Governors
Review due

Date

Spring 2015
Spring 2015
Spring 2015
Spring 2018