

BONNER PRIMARY SCHOOL



REVISED JULY 2017

Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Bonner Primary School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

This policy is intended for all school staff, governor, parents and pupils.

School Attendance Aims

The staff and governors at Bonner Primary school believe that children must attend school regularly and punctually in order to achieve their potential. If children take too much time off school or arrive late regularly they can fall behind with their work, suffer embarrassment and feel left out socially in the class.

The school therefore aims to raise attendance levels up to and beyond those identified in the school development plan in line with the Local Education Authority and Department for Education targets. Our current targets are:

- To raise attendance to at least 95%
- To reduce the level of unauthorised absences (i.e absences for which there is no satisfactory explanation) by 0.9%, from 2.4% to 1.5%

The school aims to do this by:

- Ensuring the culture and ethos of the school promotes regular and punctual attendance.
- Monitoring attendance continuously throughout the school.
- Implementing strategies to improve attendance and reduce the level of unauthorised absence, lateness and holidays taken in term time.
- Reviewing these strategies regularly to ensure continued improvement.

Partnership between parents and the school

In order for pupils to reach their potential all school staff, governors, parents and pupils have a responsibility to work together to ensure regular attendance.

The importance of regular and punctual attendance forms a central part of all admissions, special education needs and annual parent interviews. It is also highlighted in the home school agreement, governors' annual report to parents, school prospectus, school newsletters and on parents' notice boards. The headteacher reports termly to the governing body on attendance and punctuality trends within the school.

School's responsibilities to improve school attendance

The school will aim to:

- Provide a high quality curriculum and positive learning environment so those pupils enjoy learning and want to come to school.
- Provide for the needs of all pupils, offering an inclusive environment where everyone can achieve success.
- Have a behaviour and discipline policy, which protects pupils from bullying, racism and sexism.
- Have a pastoral care program, including the development of PSHE policy and input from the learning mentor. and Home School Liaison Worker.
- Seek to establish strong home-school links and communication systems, which can be used to address concerns as they arise.
- Follow up all unexplained absences and leave taken in term time.
- Treat persistent lateness as a form of absence, and follow this up with parents at an early stage.

- Raise concerns about attendance with parents at an early stage and work with them to resolve any problems identified as quickly as possible.
- Involve other agencies such as the Education Social Worker Service or Education Psychology Service when necessary.
- Access extra resources for improving attendance, for example Social Inclusion Projects.

Parent responsibilities

- Parents have the legal responsibility to ensure that their child attend school regularly and on time, and are expected to support children's learning by ensuring this happens. Children arriving late seriously disrupt the learning other the other pupils who arrived on time and are already settled in class.
- Parents should contact school on the first day of absence giving details of the reason for absence and the expected day of return. All sensitive information will be kept confidential.
- Parents should not keep their children off school for any of the following reasons:
 - To go shopping
 - To translate for family or friends
 - To go to the airport to meet or say goodbye to family or friends
 - To visit relatives
 - To stay home for a delivery or service company
 - To spend a long weekend at the caravan
 - To look after family members
 - To take a holiday during term time.

This list does not cover every unacceptable reason for keeping a child off school. Children should **never** be kept off school without good reason.

- If children are seriously ill they should be kept off school. Parents should inform the school on the first day of absence.
- All non-emergency medical or dental appointments should be made after school or in the school holidays.
- Parents are expected to organise family holidays to coincide with the school holidays. Parents do not have the right to take a child on holiday during term time. **The Governors have adopted the LEA's guidance on holidays in term time**, which states that requests for holidays during term time should not be agreed. In *exceptional circumstances only*, the governors *may* agree to a child being taken out of school during term time. Parents should apply in writing to the headteacher for permission. An application form is available from the school office. Exceptional leave will not be approved for reasons such as the low cost of a holiday, because the climate is better or to visit relatives. **If children are taken out of school during term time without permission, there is a risk that they will lose their school places.**

Pupils' responsibilities

- Pupils should attend school regularly and on time.
- Pupils arriving late should report to the office before going to class.
- Pupils should take part in all lessons as directed by staff.
- Pupils should bring any difficulties to the attention of their teacher.

Registration

- The school uses the LBTH manual registers.
- The class teacher must complete registers twice a day, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions, this is a legal requirement. Guidance on completing registers is attached as Appendix A.
- A summary is also included at the back of each register.
- Parents will be contacted if a child is absent and the school has not been given a reason.

Monitoring and Support

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored by:

- Class teachers, Education Social Worker, Home School Worker and the Headteacher through daily register routine.
- Headteacher and SMT who will also devise, implement, and evaluate plans for raising attendance and punctuality levels.
- The school's Education Social Worker in regular register checks and discussions with the Headteacher.

Any concerns raised by the above about individual children or families will be investigated by the school who will work with the family to resolve any issues as quickly as possible.

Incentives and Rewards

The school recognises good and improved attendance and punctuality as individual and group achievement and celebrates this by awarding certificates on a regular basis, and presenting trophies to the best attending classes each half term. Children also receive individual attendance prizes each term for excellent attendance and a prize each term time their class achieves 100% attendance for a week.

Further information

Further information can be found in the school prospectus.

This policy will be reviewed and updated during the spring term each year.

Appendix A

Guidance on marking registers

Class teachers must mark the register twice a day, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. Black and red ink only should be used.

The following symbols should be used:

/\ present am and pm

/\ (recorded within a circle + record the time. Late up to 10 minutes from the beginning of registration. The LEA strongly recommends that schools take a firm line on the importance of punctuality by allowing no more than 10 minutes for pupils to receive a present mark.

L Late – more than 10 minutes from the end of registration.

Approved educational activities

These are treated as present for statistical purposes. They are:

- I attending interview at another school
- P approved sports activity
- V educational visit or school journey
- W work experience
- Z dual registration with PRU or special school
- Z other off-site provision, including children receiving hospital tuition

Authorised absence is any absence authorised by the school in accordance with regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil Registration Regulations) 1995 and Amendment 3 of the Education (Pupil Registration Regulations) 1997. Absence can only be authorised if the school receives an acceptable explanation for the absence. These are:

- Z pupil not yet on roll
- C family bereavement / caring for sick family member- NB this should only be used very exceptionally for caring
- C social occasions / public performances (where the latter have been licensed by pupil services)
- E excluded
- M medical and dental appointments
- R religious observance
- S study leave
- T Traveller child in the process of travelling
- I illness
- G extended leave- unauthorised
- N no reason yet known for absence
- O unauthorised absence

Authorised absence should be recorded by a circle with the addition of the appropriate symbol to indicate clearly that there is an acceptable reason for the absence.

It will not always be known at the time of registration whether an absence can be authorised, for example where no explanation has been received from the parent. In such

cases, the absence should be recorded by a circle. Authorisation can be given later, and the appropriate symbol added, provided an acceptable explanation is received from the parents.

Martin Tune
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Next Review July 2019