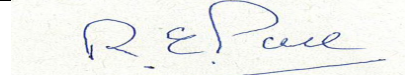


St Barnabas Primary School



Attendance Policy

Author/Person Responsible	<i>Headteacher Miss Sarah Sheppard</i>
Date of Ratification	<i>November 2021</i>
Review Group	<i>LOC Committee</i>
Ratification Group	<i>LOC Committee</i>
Review Frequency	<i>Every 2 years</i>
Review Date	<i>November 2023</i>
Previous Review Amendments/Notes	<i>October 2021 - updating</i>
Related Policies	<i>Medical Needs Policy, Inclusion Policy.</i>
Chair of Governors Signature	

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Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Part 1: EIA Screening

Policies, Procedures or Practices:	Attendance	DATE:	November 2021
EIA CARRIED OUT BY:	S Sheppard	EIA APPROVED BY:	S Sheppard

Groups that may be affected:

Are there concerns that the policy could have a different impact on any of the following groups? (please tick the relevant boxes)	Existing or potential adverse impact	Existing or potential for a positive impact
Age (young people, the elderly; issues surrounding protection and welfare, recruitment, training, pay, promotion)		X
Disability (physical and mental disability, learning difficulties; issues surrounding access to buildings, curriculum and communication)	X – Considered within the policy.	
Gender reassignment (transsexual)		X
Marriage and civil partnership		X
Pregnancy and maternity		X
Racial groups (consider: language, culture, ethnicity including gypsy/traveller groups and asylum seekers)		X
Religion or belief (practices of worship, religious or cultural observance, including non-belief)	X – Considered within the policy	
Sex (male, female)		X
Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual; actual or perceived)		X

- Any adverse impacts are explored in a Full Impact Assessment.



St Barnabas Primary School Attendance Policy

1. Rationale

- 1.1 Regular attendance at school is essential to each child's academic success and life-chances. Research links attendance with achievement, indicating that even occasional broken weeks can have a negative effect. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. In promoting good attendance it is also hoped that this will lead to the development of habits of good attendance and punctuality for the future. We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 **Regular school attendance** is essential to ensure the best outcomes for our pupils. By 'regular' our policy is that all pupils attend each and every day that they are expected to attend. There may be exceptional circumstances when absences may be agreed in line with national attendance code guidance.
- 1.3 **Health Needs and attendance.** About 60 % of all register absence marks relate to illness codes. In order to ensure health needs are addressed we will take full account of the health needs policy as set out in the following link:
<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/Medical-Needs-Policy-December-2016.pdf>

2 Purposes

- 2.1 To ensure that parents/carers understand their duties to see that their children are present at school, for the morning and afternoon sessions, on the days that the school is open for pupils except where circumstances are deemed to constitute an authorised absence (see 3.3)
- 2.2 To ensure that teachers and other school staff are aware of the distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence and the procedures for recording and reporting such occurrences.
- 2.3 To enable action to be taken quickly where unexplained absence or regular lateness occurs.
- 2.4 To ensure that officers of the Local Education Authority are informed where necessary so that they can fulfil their statutory obligations.



3 Registration Guidelines

3.1 Attendance registration. We have a legal duty to register all pupils in the attendance register in the morning and afternoon. We will code according to national guidelines. Where there is a pattern of absence and no clear supporting evidence of acceptable reasons for absence we will mark these as unauthorised. (See` health and attendance’).

3.2 The registration period will be deemed to be:

8:45 am to 9.00 am

1:00pm (EYFS and KS1) 1.20 pm (KS2)

After these times the registers will be deemed to be closed.

3.3 Any arrival after 9 am and 1 pm/ 1.20pm will be regarded as late and marked accordingly using the (L) code. Arrivals after 9.15 am will be recorded as unauthorised (U) code. Pupils will be recorded as being present in school if arriving after 9:15am by being recorded in the office. An entry for that child will be made in the office and will be dated, timed and any reason given recorded on SIMS. It will be available for inspection by the Educational Welfare Service and used to reconcile the class register in the event of a school evacuation or fire drill.

3.4 Persistent lateness: We believe that a pupil arriving late will not receive the best outcomes. Arriving late can be unsettling for the pupil and may cause classroom disruption. Parents who bring children to school persistently late will be invited to attend a School Attendance Meeting (SAMS) and could be liable for a fixed penalty notice if there are 6 or more (U) Code late makes (after 9:15am) within a 35 day period.

3.5 First Day of Absence Call: It is essential that parents provide an explanation as to why their child is absent from school as early in the school day as possible so that the school knows that the child is safe and hasn’t been injured or abducted if walking to school alone. We will regularly request updates of parent-carer contact information. Adults who have day to day care of a pupil are legally responsible for ensuring regular attendance. We will ensure that we know where children are via our First Day Absence procedure outlined below:

- Parents have a responsibility to call the school before school and leave a message on the office answering machine/ or via email, to let the school know if a child is absent from school on that day, along with the reason for this absence. A note will be made on SIMS next to the absence mark explaining the absence.
- Dojo is not to be used for reporting absence as this is not always checked by teachers before school starts.
- **Should a parent not ring the school,** before 9:30am the school office will call the parent and ask for an explanation for the absence. *Parents should not rely on the office phoning them as this wastes valuable administration time.*
- **Should the parent not answer the phone,** other contact numbers will be tried to establish the whereabouts of the child.

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- **Should the parent still not be contactable**, the Headteacher will assess the risk to that child based on evidence available. The school will then either conduct a home visit, or ask Social Services or the police to do so, to establish that the child is safe.

4. Health and Attendance

- 4.1 Where illness is a clear reason for a pattern of absence with supporting information (for example repeat reference to medical aspects by young person, parent carer, prescription information, medical appointment cards, information from other health professionals) we will put in place an Individual Health Care Plan in line with the South Gloucestershire Council Medical Needs Policy. <http://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/Medical-Needs-Policy-December-2016.pdf>
- 4.2 Where there are occasional absences such as for sickness and diarrhoea there is no requirement for medical supporting information. For repeat absences we will follow government guidance and agree to absences where there is appropriate medical supporting information.
- 4.3 Where a parent/ carer maintains that absences are regularly the result of ill-health, yet no evidence of this is provided, the school may choose to not automatically authorise such absences unless there is medical evidence to do so.

5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

- 5.1 The decision to authorise an absence is made by the Headteacher. There is no automatic right for an absence to be authorised.
- 5.2 Absence can be **authorised** if:
 - The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause.
 - The absence occurs so that the pupil could take place in a religious observance set apart by the religious body to which the parent/carers belongs.
 - The school at which the child is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home and no suitable transport, boarding accommodation arrangements or alternative school placement have been made by the LA.
 - The pupil is the child of Traveller parents/carers
 - There is a family bereavement.
 - The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion (whether an absence is exceptional is determined by the Headteacher. *Family birthdays/ gatherings or holidays are not considered exceptional special occasions.*
- 5.3 Absence will be counted as unauthorised if:
 - No explanation is forthcoming. The school should be informed on the first day of any absence and the reason and expected length of absence given.
 - The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
 - The pupil stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings.
 - The pupil is shopping during school hours.

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- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions.
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday.

5.4 The 1996 Education Act requires parents and carers to ensure children attend school regularly and punctually. Where patterns of absence or broken weeks have been identified and where there are unauthorised absences we will seek to engage with parents-carers and the young person. Where efforts to address attendance have not led to a reduction in unauthorised absence consideration will be given to a formal legal process.

6. Leave of Absence (Inc. Holidays in term time)

The Government has made an amendment to the 2006 regulations on term time absence. Schools are now prohibited from authorising any leave in term time; unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We aim to work in partnership with parents, and we know that there are sometimes exceptional circumstances which mean absence may be required during term time. If a child requires exceptional circumstances leave, parent/carers must first ask permission from the Headteacher, by completing and returning the 'request for authorisation for absence during term time' form. Parent/carers will be asked not to make arrangements or commitments for their child's absence before authorisation has been given.

Requests for exceptional circumstances leave will only be considered two weeks before the date of leave to enable the Headteacher to consider the items below and no leave will be authorised retrospectively:

- How much education the child has already missed through illness or arriving late.
- What learning the child will miss at school?
- The child's level of attainment.

6.1 There is no automatic right to leave of absence during term time and parents must complete a 'Request for a request for authorisation for absence during term time' form and submit to the school making any request prior to any leave.

6.2 No holiday absence will be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g. a forces family who cannot holiday together at any other point in the year.

6.2 Children with medical conditions, such as Autism, may be given leave of absence during term time to attend a family holiday where the school deems that their needs require a quiet environment where there are no crowds.

6.3 Where a leave of absence has not been authorised, should the parent/ carer still choose to take the child out of school, then this will be marked on the register as an 'Unauthorised Absence' and may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice.

6.4 A decision on whether to authorise a request for absence during term time will be made using the following criteria, in line with school guidelines:

- Percentage of attendance in current academic year
- Percentage of attendance in previous academic year
- Learning missed
- Current attainment

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7. Penalty Notices:

- 7.1 In cases where parents or carers take their child on holiday during term time we will follow the Code of Conduct and request that a Penalty Notice is issued by the local authority where applicable. Where all or almost all unauthorised absence marks are U coded (including late after registration) we will first seek to engage with parents/carers and pupil. If U code absences persist we will request a Penalty Notice in line with the LA Code of Conduct.
- 7.2 They may be issued to one or both parents/carers regarding each of their children if more than 10 sessions (1 session equals either a morning or afternoon) of unauthorised absence are accumulated in a 7 week period (i.e. 70 sessions of possible attendance at school). A session is a morning or an afternoon. Any person with day to day care of the child may be issued with a Notice; this could include grandparents, step-parents and partners.
- 7.3 Unauthorised Holidays in term time will automatically result in the school requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice on the 11th missed session (6th day of absence).
- 7.4 Other than for holidays in term time, the decision regarding the issue of a Penalty Notice will be taken as part of the legal process between the school and local authority (i.e. at Attendance Panels and Reviews).
- 7.5 The fine is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.

8. Strategies for promoting good attendance and monitoring:

- 8.1 Weekly class attendance certificates will be given out in Praise Assembly
- 8.2 Termly attendance certificates will be given out to pupils with 100% attendance in the end of term Praise Assembly.
- 8.3 The support of the Family Link Worker will be offered to families struggling to attend this could be in the form of an EHAP
- 8.4 The Family Link worker will monitor attendance regularly (6 times a year) alongside the EWO and contact individuals following the standard process.

9. Parental Engagement regarding attendance:

- 9.1 We believe regular attendance is so important in ensuring best outcomes for our pupils that we will review our attendance performance each term. We will regularly look at the pupils where there is a pattern of absence. Where a child has a pattern of Broken Weeks we will contact parents and may arrange to meet and review progress. There is clear national evidence that children who are on Free School Meals attend less than pupils as a whole. We will ensure that support to ensure attendance of all pupils who are on FSM is prioritised. The school will discuss

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attendance concerns with parents at the earliest opportunity as working in partnership is the most effective way to improve attendance.

9.2 **Appendix 1** shows the action that will be taken to engage with parents, initially through informal discussions or a standard awareness raising letter, then through more formal School Attendance Meetings and School Attendance Panel meeting, where:

- there are five broken or incomplete weeks in each old-style term (Autumn, Spring, Summer).
A broken week is one where there is at least one late or absence mark in the register;
- attendance is below 95% over a term;
- there have been repeat late or U code marks with or without other attendance concerns.

10. Removal from Roll

10.1 There are strict grounds as to when schools may remove pupils from their admissions register. These are outlined in Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006. Regulation 12(6) states that when a school has decided to delete a pupil's name from their admission roll they must notify their Local Authority as soon as the ground for removal is met and no later than the time at which the pupil's name is removed from the register.

10.2 If the pupil has left the school without explanation and there are concerns about the pupil's welfare we will contact the local Access and Response Team immediately.

10.3 If there are concerns that a pupil may be at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) or radicalisation we will contact the Access and Response Team immediately.

10.4 If the school is told that a pupil is leaving to attend another school, staff at the school of departure will establish the pupil's new address, the name and address of the new school and the date the pupil will start there. Once the school has confirmation that the child has started at the new school, they will update **Arbor** Management Information System (MIS). Whenever a pupil leaves a school a Common Transfer File (CTF) must be completed.

10.5 If the school is concerned about any aspect of a transfer or if a pupil has "disappeared" the matter will be drawn without delay to the attention of the Access and Response Team immediately. Please see further information in Children Missing Education Policy
<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/education-and-learning/schools-and-education/behaviour-and-attendance/children-missing-education/>

11. Part-time timetables

11.1 All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a part time timetable to meet an individual pupil's needs and this decision is made by the Head Teacher in consultation with external agencies. A part time timetable is time limited and must not be treated as a long term solution and can only be made with parental agreement. This will be reviewed every two weeks within the time limited

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period. The school will mark the sessions where the pupil is not expected to attend as authorised absence. (Code C).

12. Attendance Data

- 12.1 Whole School Attendance Data is shared with the Governing Body as part of the Headteacher's Report and is published on the school website annually.
- 12.2 Targets to improve attendance are set by the Governing Body annually.
- 12.3 There is a named Attendance Governor who monitors the school's attendance procedures along with the Headteacher.

Appendix 1 - STAGES OF PARENTAL CONTACT:

STAGE	THRESHOLD	CONTACT/ ACTION
Stage 1	<p>Where there are no prior concerns regarding attendance in previous academic year:</p> <p>Year to date broken weeks greater than 5% OR 5 or more broken weeks in an old-style term (e.g. T1-2, T3-4, T5-6),</p> <p>AND/ OR</p> <p><i>Attendance less than 95% with no clear, valid explanation (e.g. single illness).</i></p>	<p>Attendance Letter 1 - <i>explaining that attendance has fallen below the school's expected threshold, offering support and informing parents that attendance will be monitored more closely for the next two terms.</i></p>
Stage 2	<p>Two terms or more > 5% broken weeks</p> <p>AND/ OR</p> <p><i>Attendance less than 95% with no clear, valid explanation (e.g. single illness).</i></p> <p>AND/ OR</p> <p><i>Attendance less than 95% AND >5% or more broken weeks in the previous academic year.</i></p>	<p>'School Attendance Meeting' held with parents & HT/FLW to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss impact of missed learning • investigate reasons for absence and solutions • set attendance targets • consider creation of Individual Health care plan • notify parents of possible Fixed Penalty Notice. • Set review period
Stage 3	<p>Continued broken weeks AND/ OR insufficient improvement in attendance since last School Attendance Meeting.</p>	<p>Further School Attendance Meeting with HT, FLW and/or Education Welfare Officer to:</p>

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	<p>AND/ OR</p> <p>Attendance less than 90% AND/ OR 10 or more broken weeks in the <u>previous academic year</u> despite School Attendance Meetings during this period.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss impact of missed learning • investigate reasons for absence and solutions • explain final, short review period before start of legal process (Attendance Panel Meeting). • notify parents of possible Fixed Penalty Notice.
Stage 4	<p>Continued broken weeks AND/ OR insufficient improvement in attendance since final School Attendance Meeting</p> <p>AND/ OR</p> <p>Attendance less than 90% AND/ OR 10 or more broken weeks in the <u>previous academic year</u> despite <u>final</u> School Attendance Meetings during this period.</p>	<p>Attendance Panel Meeting Held.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise parent/carer that a panel meeting will take place. • School Attendance Panel meeting takes place (Letter sent to arrange) • Parents warned about possible legal action if attendance doesn't improve.
Stage 5	<p>If no improvement after 4 weeks of Attendance Panel Meeting.,</p>	<p>Attendance Panel review chaired by LA representative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LA considers beginning legal process for non-attendance.

Appendix 2

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school

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CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school

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CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

CODE	DEFINITION	SCENARIO
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day