

# **BOWESFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 28 (right to education)

“Every child has the right to an education.”

Article 29 (goals of education)

“Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full.”

As adults, we are duty bearers, who must ensure that children are supported in accessing their rights.

**It is the legal duty of those with parental responsibility to ensure their child’s regular attendance at school.**

*A parent means:*

- *All natural parents, whether they are married or not;*
- *Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,*
- *Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child.*

DFE School attendance parental responsibility measures January 2015

### **Responsibilities**

School will ensure the following:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact with parent /carer when a pupil fails to attend school – and no reason has already been provided.
- Prompt and confidential action to address any identified problems.
- Rewards for good and significantly improved attendance and punctuality.

We expect parents/carers to ensure:

- Their child attends school each day on time (ready to start at 8.50 a.m.)
- They contact school on their child’s first day of absence, advising of reasons for absence by 8.45 a.m.
- They provide medical evidence for absence if their child’s attendance falls below 96% so that absence can be authorised.
- They provide emergency contact details for a minimum of 2 people – so that we can contact home if a child is absent

We expect that children:

- Attend school each day.
- Arrive on time
- Inform a member of staff of any problems they are experiencing which may affect their ability to attend school and access their education.

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#### **Tackling absence**

*First day of absence:* If there has been no contact from home by 8.45 a.m. the Parent Support Adviser rings families to confirm the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If there is no reply, they will then text home the same day requesting a phone call to school.

If no response is received, a home visit will be made the same day to ensure the child's safety and the absence will be unauthorised if there is no valid reason.

*Longer absences:* If a child has been absent for 3 days, the Parent Support Adviser makes a follow up call to see how they are and when they will be well enough to return to school.

Every fortnight, the PSA will check any children whose attendance from September falls below 96% (national average).

Their parents will be informed that any absences can only be authorised if they provide medical evidence. This can be a prescription (with date corresponding to absence), an appointment card or letter, or a note from a medical professional.

Every six weeks, a SIMS report will be run to identify any children with 10 or more unauthorised absences within the six week period.

These children will be referred to the Local Authority for an LA warning letters. If, within a monitoring period, they have any further unauthorised absence, they may be issued with a penalty notice.

#### **Tackling lateness**

Punctuality is monitored daily within class and fortnightly by the Parent Support Adviser. Children who arrive on time are included in a raffle draw at the end of the day.

Families are contacted on a fortnightly basis if their child is regularly late (more than 3 times in 2 weeks).

#### **Monitoring attendance**

Encouraging and monitoring attendance is an integral part of the pastoral duties of each class teacher. They have primary responsibility for monitoring the attendance of children in the class, for collecting notes explaining absences, for discussing attendance with parents / carers and for maintaining an accurate register.

Office staff / teachers must add comments (e.g. a record of a verbal message from a parents / carer or a record of attempts to contact the family re absence) on SIMS and initial their comments. Notes from parents / carers are kept by the office.

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If a teacher has concerns about a child's attendance, these should be discussed with the Parent Support Adviser.

Each child's attendance is monitored 6 weeks from the start of the autumn term and then at least fortnightly. This is done by identifying children whose attendance is below 96%.

A letter are sent to families to tell them that their child's attendance is below 96% and we require evidence of illness or appointments in order to be able to authorise absence.

#### **Next steps**

If attendance and / or punctuality improve to at least 96%, this will be recognised by school and no further action will be taken.

If no improvement is made the PSA will make a home visit to address concerns or invite parents / carers into school. From this contact an attendance plan will and be put in place and a date set to review attendance targets.

If there is still no improvement and attendance falls below 90% with recent unauthorised absences the child will be referred to the non-attendance panel. This means a meeting with the Headteacher and the attendance Governor.

If concerns continue, school will make a referral to the Local Authority which will instigate Attendance Procedures.

Ultimately, the Local Authority has the power to prosecute parents for their child's unauthorised absence.

#### **Rewarding good attendance**

**Weekly** – Dudley the dragon and the attendance trophy are awarded to the class with the best attendance each week during assembly each Monday.

Classes are awarded the following amount of money, which they can spend on themselves at the end of a term.

£10 for 100% with no lates.

£5 for the highest attending class - no lates.

£1 for any class above 97% - no lates.

**Termly** – Individual children are rewarded as following in termly assemblies.

Excellent attendance (100%) certificate and treat

Very good attendance (98% +) certificate

Improved attendance (within the term) certificate

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### **Leave of absence during term time**

Families are given regular holiday lists at the start of each school term. Families requesting leave of absence during term time must complete a leave of absence request form. Leave cannot be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances, which are considered on an individual basis. Families receive written feedback on their request and a copy of the letter is kept in school, along with the request form, including a note of whether / not the leave can be authorised for exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised leave of absence is monitored every six weeks with referrals made to the Local Authority as appropriate.

### **Children Missing from Education**

Children who are missing from education because they have not returned after a school holiday or who have moved house and not been admitted to another school are referred within 2 days to the Local Authority.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher and Attendance Governor, Chris Shannon. This policy will be reviewed in September 2017.

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>Ratification Date by Governing Body</b>
March 2017	Changes to in-school procedures to improve attendance and punctuality	7.3.17.