



**Bowesfield**  
Primary School

# **Bowesfield Primary School**

## **Attendance Policy**

Date to be ratified by the Governing Body: 6.10.21.
Review Date: September 2022

## **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.

## **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 (safeguarding).
- 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.

## **Tackling absence**

*First day of absence:* If there has been no contact from home by 9.15 a.m a member of school staff will ring families to confirm the reason for absence and the expected date of return. If there is no reply, a text home will be sent the same day requesting a phone call to school.

If no response is received, a home visit will be made the same day by the Pastoral Support Advisor 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 Pastoral 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 October falls below 96% (national average 2020-21).

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. *Due to COVID-19, we understand that it may be more difficult for families to get access to GP appointments and are clearly giving the message to families that their child should not attend if they have COVID-19 symptoms. Therefore, each child with attendance below 96% will be considered on an individual basis with an individual note added to their letter as appropriate.*

Every two weeks, the PSA will identify any children with 10 or more unauthorised absences within the previous 8 school weeks.

These children will be referred to the Local Authority for an LA warning letter. If, within a monitoring period, they have any further unauthorised absence, they may be issued with a penalty notice or be invited to an Attendance Case Conference in line with LA policy.

### **Tackling lateness**

The school day starts at 8:50am. If you arrive after this time via the main entrance you will be given an L mark. If you arrive after 9:15am you will be given a U mark on the register. The U means your child has been given an unauthorised absence for the morning session.

Punctuality is monitored daily within class and fortnightly by the Pastoral Support Adviser. Children who arrive on time every day are included in a raffle draw at the end of the week where they can win a prize.

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

### **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.

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

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

A letter is 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 and attendance falls below 90% with recent unauthorised absences the PSA will make an appointment to address concerns by telephone or in person as appropriate. From this contact an attendance plan will be put in place and a date set to review attendance targets. This may be done as part of an Early Help meeting if appropriate.

If concerns continue and attendance falls below 85%, school will make a referral to the Local Authority for all children of statutory school age who will instigate Attendance Procedures.

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

### **Rewarding good attendance**

#### **WEEKLY ATTENDANCE:**

Every child with full attendance that has been on time every day has their name put in a class weekly draw. Two names will be chosen and the winners are able to select a prize from the class prize box.

#### **END OF TERM ATTENDANCE:**

**TERM 1 - BRONZE CERTIFICATE** for all children with 100% attendance.

**TERM 2 - SILVER CERTIFICATE** for all children with 100% attendance.

**TERM 3- GOLD CERTIFICATE** and reward for 100% attendance for the full school year.

**EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE CERTIFICATE** for children with 97-99% attendance at the end of the academic year.

#### **Not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)**

Children will not need to be absent from school unless they test positive for Covid or are displaying symptoms.

Remote education will be provided for pupils not attending due to circumstances related to coronavirus.

Code x should be used to record such absences.

### **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 or 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 (CME)**

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 5 days to the Local Authority.

### **Dual registered children**

The attendance of children attending another school who are dual registered and remain on roll at Bowesfield is monitored as follows:

Daily – register check by school attended

    If present – no further action

    If absent – email to Bowesfield’s Pastoral Support Adviser with details of action taken. Comment to be added to our register using SIMS. The host school will keep us updated on the absence daily, including informing us of the child’s return to school.

Weekly – Host school to send registration certificate weekly. To be filed and kept in the office.

### **Children celebrating religious festivals**

The number of absences authorised due to religious observance within an academic year is dependent on the dates of the festival. The majority of children in school are Muslim and the dates of Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr are adjusted annually.

If a religious festival falls on a school day, children may have 2 sessions authorised absence. If it falls at the weekend, they are expected in school all week and absences will be categorised as normal.

The maximum number of authorised absences per child is up to 4 within one academic year.

Parents / carers are asked to confirm whether or not their child will be attending school the day before it is likely to be Eid. This is recorded on a class sheet by the teacher at hometime. For Y6 children who walk home independently, the Pastoral Support Adviser will contact their parents by phone to confirm their plans.

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher as follows:

- End of half term analysis of attendance of statutory school-aged children against the national average and previous year.
- End of half term analysis of attendance of the attendance of groups against the national average and previous year:  
By Gender  
Pupil Premium / Not  
English as an additional Language (EAL) / Not  
Children in our Care (CioC) / Not  
SEN / No SEN  
Ethnicity
- End of half term analysis of attendance of non-statutory school-aged children against the national average and previous year.
- End of half term analysis of Persistent Absence against the national average and previous year
- End of half term analysis of Persistent Absence of groups as above.

Information will be shared with Governors in October, March and June.

This policy will be reviewed in July 2022.

<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>Ratification Date by Governing Body</b>
15 June 2018	Changes made to reflect change in job title from Parent Support Adviser to Pastoral Support Adviser. Changes made to weekly class rewards to reflect updated practice. Change made to name of Attendance Governor Changes made to include Dual registered children, celebration of religious festivals, monitoring arrangements.	19.6.18.
2.9.19.	Page 2 - changes made in line with LA Pupil Attendance and Absence Management Policy, July 2019: Referral to the LA if there are 10 unauthorised absences within the previous 8 school weeks (previously 6 weeks).	26.9.19.
8.9.20.	Page 3 – paragraph inserted re below 96% attendance monitoring.	17.9.20.

	<p>Page 4 – due to COVID-19 restrictions, attendance prizes will be awarded in classes rather than assemblies.</p> <p>Page 4 – Dudley picture rather than soft toy.</p> <p>Pages 4-5 section regarding 'not attending in circumstances relating to coronavirus (COVID-19) inserted.</p>	
11.9.21	<p>Changes made to update the first day response procedures.</p> <p>Change in reward system updated.</p>	