



Heaton St. Barnabas' CE (VA) Primary School

Policy For

Attendance and **Punctuality**

This policy was approved by Curriculum Committee

On: 26th January 2024

Position: Chair of Curriculum Committee

Heaton St. Barnabas' C.E. (Aided) Primary School **Policy for Attendance and Punctuality**

POLICY

Importance of Good Attendance?

Regular school attendance has always been important. Without it the efforts of the best teachers and the best schools will come to nothing. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. It places at risk, and in some cases, it can lead to pupils being drawn into patterns of anti-social or criminal behaviour. (Department for Education)

The school aims to provide an environment which is welcoming, friendly and caring and to maintain high expectations of behaviour and achievement. In order to achieve these aims. all school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually. Parents/ Carers are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually.

From the term following their fifth birthday all children are legally required to attend school for 190 days each academic year unless they are unable to attend through illness or other exceptional circumstances. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure breadth and balance; therefore the full 190 days in school are essential for children to receive their full entitlement to education.

The school has rigorous procedures for identifying poor attendance. Where attendance is found to be unacceptably low the school will take all possible steps to improve attendance to ensure that all children have the best possible chance of making good progress and achieving the outcomes that they are capable of.

Aims of this policy

1. To ensure that the attendance of all children is the best it can be to support maximum progress and attainment for all children
2. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils in the interests of children's safety and welfare
3. To develop a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance related data.

Registration

Each day is divided into two sessions and an attendance register is completed at the start of each session. (Education Act 1956, Regulation 3)

Session times for Heaton St. Barnabas' Primary School are

	Reception & KS1		Y3 and Y4		Y5 and Y6
Morning Session	8.45 – 11.45 a.m.		08.45 –12.15p.m.		08.45 –12. 30p.m.
Afternoon Session	12.30 - 3.15 p.m.		1.00 - 3.15 p.m.		1.15 - 3.15 p.m.

The school day begins at 8.45 a.m for all children. Children may arrive and come straight into school through their own allocated entrance between 8.35 to 8.45a.m.

Please note that children's entrance doors are locked at 8.45 a.m.

Please Note: Children who are late disrupt the start of the day for all children in their class as well as miss valuable learning introductions themselves.

Children who are late from 8.50am onwards, should be brought into school by a parent/carer through the main entrance their name will be recorded on InVentry (an electronic signing in system).

When all registration is complete office staff contact all parents of all absent children who have not contacted school. Parents/carers are contacted by text or direct phone-call.

The text list is checked for delivery of messages. Where the message has not been delivered, staff do their best to contact parents by direct call or land line to verify a reason for absence. Admin staff amend registers for all children whose parents reply to text messages and phone calls. Where there is no reply staff will make all reasonable effort to contact parents or carers, this may include home visits by school staff or BCL Attendance team.

Where a child is not present at the time the register is taken they will be marked absent. If a child arrives after this point they will be given a late mark. The number of times a child arrives late will be recorded on the child's school report. Where a child regularly arrives after registration the Parent /Guardian will be contacted by the school. If the situation persists and the pupil becomes identified as persistently absent the issue may be referred to BCL intervention attendance consultancy team working with the school to support families to improve attendance. Panel meetings will be held with parents where absences continue persistently and attendance levels drop well below 90%.

Reporting absence

It is parents' responsibility to inform the school when their child is absent and to give a reason for the absence.

If a child is unable to attend school parents should:

- Telephone the school office on the first day of absence as soon as possible and no later than 09:30 am giving as much information as is available at that time.
- Inform the school if the absence continues beyond the date given in the initial contact
- Send a signed, written letter/e-mail / text confirming the reason for absence when the child returns to school

If the absence is likely to be prolonged, parents should inform the school so that arrangements can be made for regular contact with school and some work can be sent home if this is appropriate.

Authorised /Unauthorised Absence

Where the school has been informed of the reason for absence and has agreed that the reason is acceptable or unavoidable, absences are recorded as authorised. If the school deems that the reason is unacceptable and /or the absence was unreasonable or avoidable the absence will remain unauthorised. If a child has four or more incomplete weeks of attendance at school due to unauthorised absence a referral to the Education Social Work Service may be made.

The attendance officer monitors attendance on a daily basis. Where he/she notices a number of absences which remain unauthorised, concerns are passed to the Head Teacher. Parents will normally be informed of our concern by letter initially. If the situation continues, Parents / Guardians will be invited in to school to discuss the problem with the Parental Involvement Worker, Head Teacher and Education Social Worker.

Rewards and Incentives

The school has established an effective system of incentives and rewards which acknowledges the efforts of pupils to attend school regularly and on time.

- Each term the class with the best attendance receives a class treat of their choice
- Certificates for 100% attendance are given out at weekly achievement assemblies
- Children who have attendance of more than 95% throughout the year will receive a certificate at the end of the year
- The class with the highest attendance per ½ term is allowed to come in non-uniform on the last day of half term
- Children with 100% attendance at the end of the year will be rewarded with prizes.

Targets may be set for individual children to improve attendance or punctuality. Certificates will be awarded to children who achieve their targets.

Religious Observance

In order to promote continuity of learning religious leaders in Bradford made an agreement with the Council in 2004 that, where a religious festival falls on a school day, 1 day of absence could be authorised for religious observance. Any additional days taken around the religious festivals will be unauthorised. No more than 3 days in any school year may be authorised for religious observance

Parents should inform school in advance if their child will be absent for a day of religious observance.

Leave of Absence

The latest legal pupil registration regulations state that leave of absence may only be granted by the school where an application has been made in advance and the head teacher considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application.

In the interest of continuity of children's education, governors at this school have decided that leave of absence will not be granted for any holidays or visits to relatives abroad taken in term time.

Where parents consider that there are exceptional circumstances they should discuss this with the school as soon as possible to request authorisation.

Family Support and Intervention

In order to support the families and school the school buys into BCL Consultancy attendance team. The team works with the attendance officer and safeguarding team to establish families who are in most need of intervention. These targeted families are then followed upon via home visits and support intervention via the BCL team. These welfare visits enable families to understand the importance of children attending school regularly and identify barriers to a child's poor attendance. Reports are provided to the school headteacher and attendance officer following the welfare visit.

Any pupils whose attendance falls below 85% are registered to receive the intervention support

Fixed Penalty Notices

After 6 sessions (3 school days) of unauthorised absence the school will inform the Local Authority who will write to parents and issue a fixed penalty notice. If there is further unauthorised absence within 20 school days of this notice a fixed penalty fine will be issued. The fine for unauthorised absence will be £60 per child, per parent.

In cases where leave of absence has not been authorised but the leave has been taken regardless, parents are advised to note that all absences will be unauthorised. If the absence exceeds 10 sessions (5 days), Education Social Services will be informed and a fixed penalty notice may be issued.

After 20 days of unauthorised absence the child's name may be removed from the school's roll following a CME (Child Missing in Education) Referral.