



8th June 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we enter the final term of the school year and trips away from home start to feel more possible, I think it is important that we send you a few reminders as to how we address holidays that are requested and taken during term time.

I also take this opportunity to remind you of our day-to-day attendance and absence procedures.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

The Government doesn't set specific attendance targets for schools, but schools are expected to set their own. At Baston CE Primary School, as in most schools, 95% is considered good attendance. This allows for children to miss a total of 9.5 days across the full school year. Persistent absence is defined as an attendance level at 90% or below.

DID YOU KNOW... Research tells us that pupils who miss between 10% and 20% of school (that's 19 to 38 days per year) stand only a 35% chance of achieving five or more good GCSEs, compared to 73% of those who miss fewer than 5% of school days!

We feel that a shared approach to this important aspect of education is helpful. Therefore, our Attendance Policy has been created and agreed by the cluster of schools within which we work in The Deepings area. A full copy of our shared policy can be found on our website.

DAY-TO-DAY ATTENDANCE

All children at Baston CE Primary School are expected to attend school for at least 95% of the time available. Should your child's attendance fall below this figure, the following process will be triggered:

- Stage 1: Child's attendance falls below 95%. An initial warning letter is provided to allow parents and carers to take action to avoid further absence.
- Stage 2: Absence continues and now falls below 90%. A second warning letter is provided and an Attendance Support Plan (ASP) between home and school is set in motion. Clear targets are set and parents and carers meet with the Headteacher weekly to ensure there is an upward turn in data.

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- Stage 3: Child's attendance does not increase above 90% despite ASP being in place. School contacts Inclusion and Attendance Team for further advice and support.
- Stage 4: In the event of extremely low attendance - and having followed all of the steps above - a final warning letter for persistent absence is sent informing parents and carers that the Local Authority considers a breach of the law to have been made. A Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) may be issued.

I think that, as with all things, a common-sense approach is needed when it comes to school attendance. In the event of a child being absent due to an operation or Chickenpox, for example, the procedure above would not run, as one would hope to see the attendance level rise naturally upon his/her return to school.

A sample copy of the letters sent at each stage can be found on our website under the attendance tab.

HOLIDAYS DURING TERM TIME

The government have recently been very clear about school attendance expectations and stand by their policy that **all holidays must take place outside of term time**.

The wording from the official government guidance for parents and carers reads as follows:

You should plan your holidays within school and college holidays as usual. Avoid seeking permission to take your children out of school or college during term time.

The guidance can be read in full [HERE](#).

Some requests for time away from school are unavoidable or will fall into the 'exceptional circumstance' category.

Some key examples:

- Family wedding (time for travel and ceremony may be authorised)
- Religious holiday/Festival
- *Urgent dental/doctor appointments
- Funeral
- *Hospital appointments

**Evidence may be required e.g. appointment card/letter.*

There are other occasions when requests for time away from school cannot be approved.

Some key examples:

- Non-specialist or non-urgent dental/doctor appointments (check-ups etc)
- Holidays/long weekends
- Appointments for siblings/other family member
- Shopping

Should you choose to take your child on holiday during term time a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) may be issued.

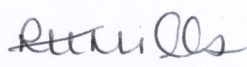
Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) Taken from our Cluster Attendance Policy

The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 amended section 444 of the Education Act 1996 to provide for the issue of a penalty notice to parents who fail to ensure that their child who is of compulsory school age and registered at a school attends there regularly. These notices can be issued as an alternative to prosecution, the penalty being £60 if paid within twenty one days and £120 if paid within twenty eight days. Failure to pay the penalty notice may result in the parent being prosecuted in accordance with Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996.

I have no doubt that in us all working together we can give our children the education they deserve by securing high levels of attendance.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office.

Kind regards



Rebecca Mills
Headteacher