

BASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Policy



(for The Deepings Cluster of Primary Schools)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Deepings Cluster of primary schools have worked together to produce this policy with the aim of having a common and united approach to maximising the attendance of pupils in the Deepings area.
- 1.2 The Deepings Cluster of primary schools are Baston Church of England Primary School, Deeping St. James Community Primary School, Langtoft Primary School, Market Deeping Community Primary School and William Hildyard Church of England Primary and Nursery School.
- 1.3 Maximum attendance at school provides pupils with the greatest opportunity to learn. To this end, Baston CE Primary School is proactive in promoting high levels of attendance for all pupils. It will act upon problems it identifies as barriers to pupils attending school. It will praise and reward pupils whose attendance is excellent.

2. Aims and objectives

- 2.1 At Baston CE Primary School;
- high expectation is placed on pupils attending school
 - it is the responsibility of parents/carers (with Parental Responsibility) to ensure regular attendance at school as required by law
 - absences are authorised only when it is deemed that there is no alternative
 - a request for a leave of absence will be granted in exceptional circumstances only
 - in addition to information shared during Parent/Teacher Consultation appointments, an annual report to parents will state the number of sessions – authorised and unauthorised – that a child has been absent from school
 - parents of pupils whose attendance falls below 90% at any measured point, for example, at the end of a term, will be notified in writing, other than in exceptional circumstances. At this point, support for the family will be offered
 - pupils and their parents/carers may need support by the school at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities. The school may, with the agreement and support of parents/carers, work in partnership with external agencies to provide support

3. Expectations

3.1 The school expects pupils to:

- attend school every day unless they are ill
- arrive on time
- tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that is affecting their attendance

3.2 The school expects parents/carers to:

- ensure their child attends school every day and punctually
- ensure that they contact the school as soon as practical and by 0915 whenever their child is unable to attend, giving details of the reason for the absence and the expected length of time the child will be away
- ensure that their child arrive well prepared for the school day
- contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's attendance in school
- to avoid, wherever possible, taking family holidays in term-time
- accept an invitation to meet with a school leader to construct an Attendance Support Plan (see Appendix 1) to increase the attendance of children who are persistent absentees.

3.3 Parents/carers of children of compulsory school age should expect the school at which their child is registered to:

- carry out regular and accurate recording of attendance
- write to them to inform them when their child's attendance falls below 90%
- make early contact when a pupil fails to attend school without prior notification
- take immediate and confidential action on any problem notified

3.4 The Governing Body expects:

- the headteacher to report regularly on attendance
- the headteacher to set challenging yet realistic targets for attendance
- the headteacher to authorise a leave of absence in line with this policy
- all staff to value and promote the importance of high attendance

4. Encouraging attendance through good practice and rewards

4.1 Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:

- accurate completion of the registers within 30 minutes (maximum) of the start of a morning and afternoon session
- presenting certificates to children who have 100% attendance at the end of terms i.e. three times a year
- presenting certificates for 100% attendance at the end of each school year
- identifying and supporting pupils who have attendance problems in advance of the transition between KS2 and KS3 by sharing relevant information with the destination school
- establishing a mechanism for working with those parents/carers who express a concern that their child is experiencing difficulty in attending school
- use of year group, class, identified groups (for example, pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND)) and pupil level attendance data which enables analysis and a timely response by the school

5. Legal responsibilities of the school

5.1 The law requires that all schools have an admission register and an attendance register. All pupils must be placed on both.

5.2 The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding

parents and carers and details of the last school attended. Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or has been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.

- 5.3** Schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and must provide the local authority with all the information held with the admission register about the pupil.

5.4 Pupils moving to a new address and/or school

Where the parent of a pupil notifies the school that the pupil will live at another address, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the full name of the parent with whom the pupil will live, (b) the new address, and (c) the date from when it is expected the pupil will live at this address.

- 5.5** Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school or will be attending a different school, schools must record in the admission register: (a) the name of the other school, and (b) the date of when the pupil first attended, or is due to start attending, that school.

5.6 Deletions from the Admission Register

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended.

5.7 Amendments to the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every amendment made to the admission register and the attendance register must include: the original entry; the amended entry; the reason for the amendment; the date on which the amendment was made; and the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

5.8 Preservation of the Admission Register and Attendance Register

Every entry in the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

5.9 Children at risk of missing education

School governing bodies must have regard to the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Schools should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses for children who go missing from school, particularly on repeat occasions. Where reasonably practicable, for every pupil, schools should hold an emergency contact number for more than one person. Emergency contact numbers should be provided and updated by the parent with whom the pupil normally resides. This goes beyond the legal requirement but is good practice. Doing so provides schools with additional options for making contact with a responsible adult when a child is missing school and is also identified as a welfare and/or safeguarding concern.

Where school staff have concerns about a child, they should use their professional judgement and knowledge of the individual pupil to inform their decision as to whether welfare concerns should be escalated.

Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not school registered or receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

All schools must notify the local authority when a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register under any of the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended, 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. This duty does not apply where the pupil's name is removed after they have completed the school's final year, unless the local authority requests for such information to be provided.

Where a school notifies a local authority that a pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register, the school must provide the local authority with the following information:

- the full name of the pupil;
- the full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- at least one telephone number of any parent with whom the pupil lives;
- the full name and address of the parent who the pupil is going to live with, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there, if applicable;
- the name of pupil's other or future school and the pupil's start date or expected start date there, if applicable; and
- the ground prescribed in regulation 8 under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

All schools (including academies) will inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

5.10 Home Educated Children

On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the pupil's local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record.

Schools and local authorities should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local authority's agreement to educate their child at home.

Parents have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education but this does not have to be at a school.

6. Registration

- 6.1** An attendance register must be kept at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session. The register must show whether the pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent (distinguished as either authorised or unauthorised), or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. Registers are returned to the school office within 15 minutes of the start of the morning and the afternoon session.

- 6.2** A record of the number of pupils present during registration will be kept on a laminated sheet positioned next to the classroom's fire exit. This is to be taken outside on evacuation and raised only when a head count has been carried out.
- 6.3** Registers must be kept in ink. Authorised absences should be entered with the correct symbol for categorising the absence. Where a pupil arrives after registration has closed, they should be marked as 'late'.
- 6.4** Attendance registers must be kept for a minimum of three years from the date that the last entries were made.

7. Responding to absences

7.1 When a pupil does not attend, the school should follow up any absence by:

- i. Ascertaining the reason
- ii. ensuring the proper safeguarding action is taken
- iii. identifying whether the absence is approved or not and
- iv. identifying the correct code to use before entering it on to the school's electronic register, or management system.

7.2 If a written note or telephone call is not received from parents/carers, a School Administrator will contact the family on the first day of absence by telephone.

7.3 Where non-attendance continues, the case will be discussed with the Attendance and Inclusion Team at Lincolnshire County Council and further action planned.

8. Authorising absences

8.1 Only the headteacher has the authority to authorise an absence. An **authorised absence** is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

8.2 The following may be reasons for authorising absences; illness, family bereavement, medical and dental appointments, religious observance, fixed term exclusion and permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated.

8.3 All other absences must be regarded as **unauthorised**. There may be exceptional circumstances to an absence. These are considered in 9.2.

9. Family Holidays

Parents/carers should not take pupils on holiday during the school term. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence should not be authorised.

9.1 Residential visits and educational visits that are longer than the school day and which are organised by the school for its pupils should not be recorded as an absence.

9.2 Exceptional circumstances may arise that lead to a pupil being absent from school. It is at the headteacher's discretion to determine whether the absence will be authorised or not. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents should be considered.

10. Legal Powers for the enforcement of attendance

10.1 Local Authorities have legal powers to enforce attendance as follows:

- School Attendance Orders (Sections 437-443, Education Act 1996). Where a child of compulsory school age is not receiving a suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, a LA may issue a School Attendance Order. These Orders are not intended for pupils who attend irregularly. Such Orders are served usually in cases where a pupil has not been enrolled in a school, and is not receiving a suitable education otherwise, and in the opinion of the authority it is expedient that the child should attend school.
- Prosecution for Irregular Attendance. (Education Act 1996 Section 444 (1),) If a pupil of compulsory school age who is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly, the parent can be prosecuted. On conviction, the offence carries a fine up to a maximum of £1000.
- Prosecution for Irregular Attendance. (Education Act 1996 Section 444(1) A) The aggravated offence will apply to parents who know that their child is failing to attend school, and take no reasonable action to secure the child's attendance. On conviction this offence carries a maximum fine of £2,500 and/or up to three months imprisonment.
- 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.
- Parenting Orders. Magistrates may impose a Parenting Order if this would help prevent further pupil absence. The Order would require parents to attend counselling or guidance sessions for up to three months. It may also specify other requirements, for example, for the parent to escort the child to and from school for up to twelve months.
- Education Supervision Orders (Section 37, Children Act 1989 / Section 447 Education Act 1996) - a Local Authority may apply to the Family Court for an Education Supervision Order (ESO) as an alternative to or in addition to prosecution of the parents. An ESO places a child under the supervision of the LA to ensure the child receives a suitable education.
- Fixed Penalty Notices are issued by the Local Authority (LA) in accordance with the requirement of regulation 14 of The Education (Penalty Notice) (England) Regulations 2007.

11. Reintegration

11.1 The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence requires planning. Designated staff should be responsible for deciding on a programme for return and for the management of that programme. Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in class as appropriate. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

11.2 Staff will be notified of the return of the long-term absentees via the head teacher. All staff need to be aware that it is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the designated staff member as soon as possible.

12. Removal from the school roll

12.1 Removal from the school roll should take place when;

- a school has been notified that the pupil has registered at another school
- a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parents/carers have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school
- the headteacher has been notified that the pupil has died
- the pupil has been permanently excluded

APPENDIX 1

BASTON CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attendance Support Plan for (INSERT NAME)

Agreed at meeting on (INSERT DATE)

Historic Attendance data

20xx/20xx	20xx/20xx	20xx/20xx	20xx/20xx

What is going well? Home/School/Medical etc	What are our main concerns? Home and School	What can be done at school to further support attendance?	What can be done at home to further support attendance?

External support required? E.g. School nurse, parent support adviser, education welfare officer?

Any additional comments

Date for next meeting