



St Bartholomew's CE Primary School

Attendance Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent / guardian / carer. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents / guardians / carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents / guardians / carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent. Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent. Unauthorised absence will also be recorded for any child where the parent does not provide a reason for a child's absence.

3 If a child is absent

- 3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register and will inform the school office. We operate a system where we will phone a parent / carer / guardian on each day of absence if we do not receive a daily call.

- 3.2 A note, phone call or parental visit to the school office communicating to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment. Evidence of medical appointment are requested.
- 3.3 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The office staff will attempt to be in contact immediately with the parent / carer / guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.
- 3.4 If the school is unable to make contact a home visit will take place. If we are still unable to confirm the safety of a child then the police will be called.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 Absence from school, for any reason, can have a negative impact on a child's educational progress and holidays in term-time should therefore be avoided.

A request from a parent / carer / guardian to take their child of compulsory school age out of school during term time can only be granted by the school in exceptional circumstances such as family bereavement. In cases of requests for absence, parents should write directly to the Head Teacher detailing the exceptional circumstances which necessitate the absence.

It is for the Head Teacher to determine if leave is granted or whether the absence will be coded as unauthorised within the school registers. Parents will be notified in writing of the decision.

5 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent / carer / guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents / carers / guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact LCC support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents / carers / guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2 The governors, supported by LCC, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents / carers / guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Attendance targets

- 7.1 The school aims to exceed average national and local attendance levels.

8 Monitoring and review

- 8.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that the attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 8.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 8.3 The rates of attendance will be reported to governors within the Head Teacher's report to Governors at FGB meetings.
- 8.4 Mrs Waine, Office Manager, monitors attendance and updates the Head Teacher half-termly. The Head Teacher is responsible for working with teachers, parents and children to break down barriers and improve attendance.
- 8.5 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Approved by Governors: **November 2022**

Review Date: **November 2024**