

Boughton Leigh Community Junior School

Attendance Policy



Inspiring Lifelong Learning

Creating Lifelong Learners

Policy updated September 2014 by Senior Leadership team

RATIONALE

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 also make the best provision we can for those children who, due to ill health, are prevented from coming to school.

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 the absence was authorised or unauthorised.

Parents whose children are of compulsory school age and registered at school are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly. If they fail to do this they are guilty of an offence and may be given a penalty notice or prosecuted under section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION

All children should be ready to come into school at **8.50 a.m.** each day although children are entitled to be on the school site from **8.40 am** on the playgrounds. The register is taken twice a day at **8.55am and 1.30pm**. A day counts as 2 attendances.

Morning registration ends at 9.00a.m. If a child arrives after the registration period, he / she will be marked in as Late. After 9.30 a.m. this will become an Unauthorised Absence.

It is essential that children arriving and leaving school with a parent / guardian outside the normal hours are signed in or out from the office. The signing in / out register in the office is used in the case of an emergency or a fire drill.

ILLNESS AND MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

Every effort should be made to arrange medical appointments outside school hours. If it is necessary for a child to be out of school for this reason, the child should be returned to school directly after the appointment.

The school office should be informed during the morning of the first day of a child's absence through illness and then each morning, if appropriate, for the duration of the absence.

DEFINITIONS

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 or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents 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.

Unauthorised Absence - An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the Headteacher.

IF A CHILD IS ABSENT

When a child is absent, the class teacher will record the absence in the register.

The school office will endeavour to contact the parent or guardian, if no message has been received regarding the reason for the absence.

Parents are, however, expected to email or telephone the school by 9.00am on the morning of the day of absence to inform the school that their child will be absent. They are asked to state a reason.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

THE EDUCATION (PUPIL REGISTRATION) (ENGLAND) (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS 2013

The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Section 2(a) "leave of absence shall not be granted unless – an application has been made in advance to the proprietor (head teacher) by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides; and the proprietor (head teacher) considers the leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application."

Leave for holidays during term time will not be granted.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There may be an occasion that constitutes **exceptional circumstances**; an application can be made to the head teacher for the consideration of an absence of up to 2 days.

LONG TERM ABSENCE

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 their school work.

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.

REPEATED AND UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Unauthorised absences remain on the child's record and will be reported to the Warwickshire Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) unit.

Attendance and punctuality are monitored by the ACE and the school. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents and guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem.

The ACE may also visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

The Local Authority has the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

MONITORING AND REVIEWING

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 school's attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

The school office will be responsible for monitoring attendance on a day to day basis. If they become aware of an unexpected pupil absence during the course of the school day, they will contact the head teacher immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this again will be reported to the Headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.

- We will text families by 9.30am on the first day of absence if no contact has been made;
- We will ensure we follow strict guidance from the Department for Education and Skills (Dfe) on attendance and registration codes;
- We will ensure we have clear stages for persistent lateness and absence including:
 1. **a stage 1 warning letter**
 2. **a stage 2 warning letter**
 3. **a referral to Attendance, Compliance and Enforcement (ACE) unit**
 4. **further action**

If children are persistently ill, we do accept that the Infant children this is often the case, we will ask for medical evidence such as a doctor's letter. Medical evidence will only be required for children with a below average attendance monitored by the attendance co-ordinator.

To provide support, advice and guidance to families:

- Our stage warning letters will offer parents/carers the opportunity to come into school and discuss any circumstances which may or may not help to improve attendance;
- The school will do its best to offer solutions to poor attendance and communicate with outside agencies to help in the process;
- We will host attendance panel meetings to monitor attendance and give families the opportunity to accept help and help themselves.

To use the attendance data available to look at how to improve attendance:

- We will check attendance weekly and promote good attendance in newsletters, parent boards and assemblies;
- We will check individual attendance and whole school attendance figures in order to target groups and/or individuals;
- We will use the figures to analyse trends based on year groups or individuals during their time at our school.

To ensure good communication between home and school:

- Our home school agreement contains a section on attendance from a parent/carer, child and school perspective;
- We will always communicate via a telephone or letter if we cannot get in touch and keep you informed of the stages we are going through;
- We will give you an attendance analysis with your child's annual report;
- We will work together to ensure any issues are dealt with as and when they arise.

To have clear rewards and sanctions in place:

- Our sanctions have been explained and include various stages of severity and involvement of other professionals;
- We have a class attendance cat, attendance certificates, stickers and publicise individual good attendance on the parent boards and group attendance via the newsletter.

This policy will only work if consistency is applied and each child and family is treated in the same fair way.