

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL Governing Board

Attendance Policy					
Date	11.02.19	Responsibility	Resources Communications	Unique I/D	8-1

Version Control			
Version	Origin	Date	Amendments
2017	Adapted from Devon County Council	February 2017	Updated model policy
2018	Reviewed from previous policy	January 2018	Adjusted reporting to governor on a termly basis, rather than the previous half-termly. Minor amends.
2019	Reviewed	February 2019	Unique I/D added. Amends to mirror school process. Approved at Resources Committee meeting

1. Aim

The aim of this attendance policy is to enable the school to provide a consistent practice that encourages and facilitates the regular attendance of all pupils. Regular attendance at school is key to steady pupil progress and enjoyment of learning, and for this reason the school is dedicated to ensuring its attendance policy is adhered to as much as is possible.

Bishopsteignton School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining excellent attendance and it is the joint responsibility of parents, pupils, and all staff members to ensure that children are attending school as they should be. We endeavour to work with families to make sure that any problems or circumstances which may lead or be leading to poor attendance are given the right attention and appropriate support.

We aim to have a target of at least 95% attendance for every child. Absence **for any reason** counts towards this target, e.g. illness, medical appointments, holidays, attending relations' celebrations, etc. **Being late after registration is completed is also counted as an absence.** If your child is participating in a school activity e.g. sports, visiting their next secondary school, or residential this is **not** an absence.

This policy is supported by our policies on **safeguarding, anti-bullying, behaviour and discipline**, and the **inclusion policy**.

2. Legal framework

The Education Act 1996 states that:

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable —

- (a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and
 - (b) to any special educational needs he may have,
- either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

A person begins to be of compulsory school age —

- (a) when he attains the age of five, if he attains that age on a prescribed day, and
 - (b) otherwise at the beginning of the prescribed day next following his attaining that age.
- [Normally referred to as the start of the term following their 5th birthday]*

Bishopsteignton School is dedicated to complying with attendance laws set out by the legal framework and has set out this attendance policy accordingly.

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Board

3. Roles and responsibilities

Governing body

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the governing body will:

- ensure that the importance of attendance is made clear by promoting the relevant school policies and guidance directed at parents and staff
- annually review the school's attendance policy and ensure that all provisions are in place to allow school staff, parents, and children to implement the policy effectively
- nominate or identify a member of the governing body who will take the lead role in monitoring attendance and coordinating provision and policies for attendance
- ensure that all legislation regarding attendance is complied with and that up-to-date guidelines are communicated to parents, children, and staff
- take time at governor's meetings to review and discuss attendance issues that have arisen in order to stay on top of expected attendance targets for the year
- ensure that the school is implementing effective means of recording attendance and organising that data, including for children who are educated off-site
- ensure that they are clear on how to analyse attendance data, including for vulnerable groups, and how to communicate the findings effectively to parents and staff
- use any data gathered to devise solutions to problems, make the proper adjustments to attendance coordination and target set for the future
- ensure that data is used within the school to measure the impact of strategies used to improve attendance.

School leadership team

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school leadership team will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own progression and achievement
- coordinate with the governing body to monitor the implementation of the attendance policy and its effectiveness, with an annual full policy review
- sets an attendance target in line with DFE and submits regular attendance data to the Education Welfare Officer
- ensure that all staff are up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation, and that staff are fully trained to recognise and deal with attendance issues
- ensure that government legislation on attendance is complied with and that they (the leadership team) are up to date with any legislation changes and how to implement them
- nominate or appoint a senior manager to take the responsibility of overseeing and monitoring attendance provision and that this person has sufficient time and resources to give to this job
- each term report attendance figures to the governing body and provide a more detailed report including attendance records, data and provision to the lead governor for attendance
- ensure that systems to record and report attendance data are in place and working effectively
- develop multi-agency relationships to help with poor attendance and support families who are having difficulties getting their child to attend

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Board

- document any specific interventions or steps taken to work with families to improve their child's attendance in case of future legal proceedings
- ensure that the local authority is informed in a timely manner if pupils cease to attend.

Teachers and support staff

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, the school's teachers and support staff will:

- be active in their approach to promoting good attendance to pupils and their parents, which includes forming positive relationships with families
- ensure that the school's teaching and learning experiences encourage regular attendance and that pupils are taught the value of high attendance for their own personal progression and achievement
- ensure that they are fully aware and up to date with the school's attendance policy and government legislation and that they will speak to another member of staff or seek support if they are unsure how to deal with an attendance issue
- ensure that they are following the correct systems for recording attendance and that attendance is taken daily
- contribute to strategy meetings and interventions where they are needed
- work with external agencies to support pupils and their families who are struggling with regular attendance.

Parents and carers

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that parents:

- engage with their children's education – support their learning and take an interest in what they have been doing at school
- promote the value of good education and the importance of regular school attendance at home
- encourage and support their children's aspirations
- follow the set school procedure for reporting the absence of their child from school (**see section 4**), and include an expected date for return
- do everything they can to prevent unnecessary school absences, such as by making medical and dental appointments outside school hours
- use the school as a support when they or their child are having difficulties, and work to form a positive relationship with the school so that there is easy communication when a problem arises
- keep the school informed of any circumstances which may affect their child's attendance
- enforce a regular routine at home in terms of homework, bedtime, etc. so that the child is used to consistency and the school day becomes part of that routine. It is vital that the child receives the same message at home as they do at school about the importance of attendance
- do not take their children out of school for holidays during term time. If parents would like to make a special request for this, they may do so to the Headteacher (**see section 4.6**)
- sign a home-school agreement on entering the school. Filed in the office (see appendix one)

Pupils

As part of our whole-school approach to maintaining high attendance, we request that pupils:

- be aware of the school's attendance policy and that they are required to attend. This will be communicated to them through the school staff and parents
- speak to their class teacher or another member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties at school or at home which may impact on their attendance

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Board

- attend all lessons ready to learn, with the appropriate learning tools requested and on time for the class. Lesson times will be made clear through their school timetable
- bring a note of explanation from their parents or carers to explain an absence that has happened or is foreseen
- follow the correct set school procedure if they arrive late (**see section 4.9**). Pupils are held responsible for this and it is made clear to all students what this procedure is by their class teacher. This will help the school to monitor attendance and keep accurate records for the child's individual attendance, and is also vital for health and safety in the event of a school evacuation
- sign a home-school agreement (see appendix one)

4. Categories of absence and procedure for reporting absences

Absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence is given to the school. Parents cannot authorise absences. Staff should make it clear on the school register whether a child's absence is authorised or unauthorised.

4.1 School notification

When a child is to be absent from school without prior permission, parents should inform the school by telephone on the first day of absence and let them know what date they expect the child to return. Alternative arrangements will be made individually with non-English speaking parents or carers.

4.2 Illness

Most cases of absence due to illness are short term, but parents will need to make a phone call to alert the school on the first day of absence.

For prolonged absence due to illness, parents/carers are asked to keep the school informed on a frequent basis and may be asked to provide the school with medical evidence, such as a note from the child's doctor, an appointment card or a prescription paper.

4.3 Medical or dental appointments

Parents should make every effort to ensure these appointments are made outside school hours. Where it cannot be avoided, children should attend school for as much of that day as possible.

4.4 Authorised absences

There may be some instances where the school will authorise absence, such as for a family bereavement.

4.5 Exclusion

Exclusion is treated as an authorised absence. The Headteacher/class teacher will arrange for work to be sent home.

4.6 Absence in exceptional circumstances

In line with the government's amendments to school attendance regulations brought in 1 September 2013, which states that: 'headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time except in exceptional circumstances'; and 'references to family holiday and extended leave have been removed from the regulations' holidays and other absences will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances which must be submitted in writing to the headteacher.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered by the headteacher and governors and they will also determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if leave is granted. When looking at requests for absence, they will consider the child's percentage attendance and the timing of the request, i.e. will it coincide with the assessment timetable. Holidays will not be authorised during the SATS period or in the immediate run-up to SATS.

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Board

If you feel that your holiday falls under exceptional circumstances, please detail in the absence request form prior to making any bookings.

4.7 Religious observance

Bishopsteignton School recognises that there may be times where children of different faiths observe religious festivals that fall outside of school holidays and weekends and will allow authorised absence for these times. Parents will be aware of these dates and should give the school written notification in advance.

4.8 Late arrival

Registration begins at 9am. Pupils who arrive after this time but before the registration period **ends at 9.10am**, must enter the school via the office and will be marked as late.

Pupils who arrive after the registration period has ended should go straight to the school office to sign in, accompanied by parent or carer; or parent/carer should call to provide a reason for the pupil's lateness. Any unjustifiable reason for absence will be marked as unauthorised. It is vital that pupils sign in at the office to ensure that appropriate health and safety regulations are followed and that all pupils are accounted for.

5. School action: following up absences

Class registers are passed to the school office at the end of the registration period. Where there are unexplained or unauthorised absences, the school will contact the parents or carers. If a pattern of unauthorised absences emerges, the headteacher or class teacher will contact the parent or carer to discuss reasons and school support systems that could help.

Where pupils have been away for either short or long term, the school will support that child when they re-enter school to help them catch up on any work that they have missed.

Class teachers and the headteacher will monitor attendance on a weekly, monthly and termly basis. If attendance dips below 90%, depending on circumstances, pupil and parents will have a supportive discussion with either the class teacher or headteacher on ways to improve attendance. If there is no improvement in attendance after this, then further intervention measures will occur; this could include an attendance action plan, further meetings with parents, and the involvement of the Educational Welfare Officer.

The Educational Welfare Service and School Attendance

The EWS is a part of the Devon Local Authority. Its aim is to ensure that every child has the opportunity to benefit from a full time education by attending school regularly. The EWS can help and advise parents/carers who may be experiencing difficulties that prevent this. It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that their child attends school regularly and the EWS expects parents/carers to do all that is necessary to make sure this happens.

Persistent unauthorised absence

It is a criminal offence for a child not to attend school regularly and it is the parent(s) responsibility to ensure they do. A Penalty Notice may therefore be issued, requiring payment of a fine of up to £60 (or £120 if payment delayed by 21 days) per parent/carer, per child, if their attendance is below an acceptable level. In certain circumstances you may be prosecuted and be required to attend the Magistrates Court where you could face up to three months imprisonment and/or a fine of up to £2,500.

You will be given every opportunity to improve your child's attendance and you will receive a written warning before any legal action is taken.

This policy will be reviewed annually

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL Governing Board

Appendix one: Home school agreement



Bishopsteignton Primary School

Home School Agreement

Rights and Responsibilities of Pupils

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
To be valued by other pupils and adults regardless of their language, culture or religion.	To value other pupils and themselves and respect their rights whatever their language, culture or religion.
A right to learn in a safe environment	To learn to the best of their abilities and let others learn
To be listened to	To listen to others and follow instructions from all adults
To be treated fairly and consistently and with respect in line with the school behaviour policy	To treat others with respect and consideration and accept the terms and conditions of the behaviour policy

BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Board



Rights and Responsibilities of the Parents and Carers

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
For your child to receive quality teaching on a daily basis	Ensure your child attends school regularly dressed in the correct school uniform. If they are unwell inform the school by phone by 8.40am
To be listened to	To raise any concerns directly with the school and not through social media
For your child to receive a rich and varied PE Curriculum	Provide a named P.E. kit for your child. Inform the school about any concerns that may affect your child's learning or behaviour
To receive Home Learning activities designed to support your child's learning	To support your child with home learning
To find out about your child's progress in school through Parent Consultation meetings	To attend Parent Consultation meetings for your child
For your child to be treated with respect	To support the School's Behaviour Policy



BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Governing Board



Rights and Responsibilities of the Staff

<u>Rights</u>	<u>Responsibilities</u>
To be treated with kindness, dignity and respect	To demonstrate and model kindness, dignity and respect
To teach	To adapt teaching style to meet the needs of all learners
To have a happy and secure working environment	Ensure that you and your child feel welcome in school
That all children and adults treat the learning environment with respect	Provide a safe, secure and exciting learning environment
For all pupils to follow the school's behaviour policy	Follow the behaviour policy and communicate clearly when this has not been followed
Have a voice and be listened to as part of the school community	Listen to and respect the views of others in the school community
To know as much as possible about pupils to enable them to support their learning with empathy, kindness and consideration	Inform parents regularly on their child's progress and achievement and of school activities via newsletters, website and texts



BISHOPSTEIGNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL Governing Board



Signed.....Pupil

Signed.....Parent

Signed.....Bishopsteignton Primary

Date.....