



Bewick Bridge Community Primary School Attendance Policy

Bewick Bridge Community Primary School aims to work together with parents/carers and the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to ensure that all children registered at school attend every day and on time, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

We aim to improve achievement of pupils by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality by creating an ethos in which attendance and punctuality are recognised and seen to be valued by the whole school. This includes a minimum target for attendance of 96 % for pupils, except for children with chronic health conditions.

Parents/Carers' Responsibilities

Parents/Carers have a legal responsibility to ensure that children of compulsory school age (term after the child turns five) attend on a regular and full time basis. Permitting an absence from school without good reason is an offence. A pupil whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed the equivalent of two whole terms of learning.

Parents/Carers must:

Ensure all children registered at Bewick Bridge attend regularly and punctually everyday unless prevented from doing so by illness or medical appointment.

Inform school in advance of any medical appointments during school time. For the absence to be recorded as medical, we require evidence from the doctor or dentist, such as appointment details card/letter/text message.

Ensure their child arrives at school in time for registration. Lateness is monitored and may be recorded as unauthorised.

Inform the school as soon as possible about any child's reluctance to come to school so that any problem can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Follow application procedures regarding a request for leave of absence in term time, which should only be taken if absolutely necessary. Leave is not automatically authorised unless considered an exceptional circumstance.

Any leave taken during term time that has been unauthorised could be subject to a Penalty Notice.

Penalty Notice

The fine for a Penalty Notice is £60 per child, per parent, increasing to £120 if not paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If a Penalty notice remains unpaid, parents may be the subject of court proceedings for failing to ensure the regular school attendance of their child(ren), which could result in the fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment of up to 3 months per parent.

Parents who take unauthorised leave during term time or whose child has a pattern of unauthorised absence over any 4 week period could be subject to the issue of a Penalty Notice.



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Registration Reception to Year 2:

The classroom door is opened at 8:50am.

All classroom doors are locked at 9:00am.

Once the classroom door has been locked, entry to the school is only via the main entrance.

Registers are open at 9:00am and closed at 9:15am. Pupils who arrive at school during this time will be recorded as late on the register.

Pupils who arrive at school after 9:15am, without an unavoidable reason, will have their lateness recorded as U; unauthorised late.

Year 3 to 6

The main door (front playground) is opened at 8:50am.

The door is closed at 9:00 am.

Registers are open at 9:00am and closed at 9:15am. Pupils who arrive at school during this time will be recorded as late on the register.

Once the classroom door has been locked, entry to the school is only via the main entrance .

Lateness

Where pupils show a persistent pattern of lateness, parents/carers will initially receive a letter informing them of the school's concerns. This will advise parent/carers to speak to a member of staff to help address the issue. Should the lateness continue despite the school's attempts to address this, a referral will be made to the EWO.

Registration at the beginning of the day is the start of the first lesson. This is also when the teacher supports children with any gaps in learning from the previous day, informs the class of their learning timetable, and prepares the pupils' for their day ahead. Children who are persistently late to school, therefore, miss a significant part of their education.

Reporting a Pupil Absent

Parents/Carers must contact the school on the first and every subsequent day of absence by 8.45am. This can be by phone or email. For any pupil not present at the close of registration, a member of the office will attempt to make contact with the parent/carer once the registers have closed at 9.00 am to enquire about the reason for absence, if the parent/carer has not informed the school that morning.

Failure to make contact with the parent/carer to establish a reason for an absence could result in an Unexplained Absence Form being sent home for the parent/carer to complete. Any unexplained absences will be recorded as unauthorised if there is no response to an enquiry.

School Responsibilities

All members of the school staff have a safeguarding responsibility for identifying trends in lateness and attendance, with the Head teacher having overall responsibility in the monitoring of attendance and lateness of every pupil. Where there are concerns, parents will always be informed and given opportunities to come into school to meet with designated staff. If applicable, support strategies will be put in place to improve the attendance or lateness of a pupil. Should a pupil's attendance or



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lateness continue to be a concern, a referral will be made to the EWO (Education Welfare Office) who will be responsible for monitoring that particular pupil's level of attendance and/or lateness. This could result in a penalty notice being issued should there be no improvement to the expected level set by the EWO.

Completion of Register

Staff will:

- Complete the registers in accordance with the guidance relating to correct usage of code
- Phone the contact numbers provided by the parent/carer to enquire about a pupil absence
- Log the outcome of the phone call on sims – pupil data system

The School Attendance Officer

Lateness and attendance is monitored daily by the school attendance officer who will:

- Scrutinise the registers daily, monitoring authorised/unauthorised pupil absence and lateness
- Raise concerns with parent/carers of identified patterns of lateness with a 'Late Letter'
- Raise concerns with parent/carers once attendance has fallen below the threshold set of 96% by instigating Stage One, of a Three Stage Letter system, to manage attendance.
- Move to Stage two if there has been no improvement in attendance. This will require the parent/carer to attend a meeting at school to discuss concerns and, working with the parent/carers, set targets to help improve the lateness and/or attendance of the pupil(s).
- Implement Stage 3 and meet with the EWO, if targets are not met due to parent/carer non engagement, despite every attempt by the school to support the family,
- Meet regularly with the EWO who will also monitor the registers and follow up any identified concerns.
- Monitor requests for leave of absence during term time and ensure parent/carers are informed of procedures in relation to authorised/unauthorised leave.
- Only the Head teacher or a designated member of staff may authorise any absence for a legitimate reason, not all absence supported by parent/carers will be classified as authorised.

Definitions of Leave

Authorised leave:

An absence is classified as authorised when a pupil has been away school for a legitimate reason such as a medical appointment and supporting evidence has been provided. However, there is an expectation that the pupil will return to school after the appointment

- Religious observance
- The leave of absence has been granted due to exceptional, unavoidable circumstances.



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Unauthorised leave:

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school, even with the support of the parent/carer, such as shopping or a birthday.
- There has been no reason provided by the parents/carers to support an absence.
- Failure to follow school procedures or inform the school when taking a pupil out of school during term time
- A leave of absence that has not been granted as not consider an exceptional circumstance

Guidance for Parents

Parents do not have any right or entitlement to take their child out of school for a term time holiday. Recent government guidelines have removed the discretion on head teachers agreeing to term time leave. Any requests for leave of absence need to be submitted before the leave is taken. Exceptional circumstance will be considered on an individual basis, but the following requests for leave of absence for a family holiday that do not meet the criteria and therefore will be unauthorised and subject to a Penalty Notice are :

- Cheaper holidays in UK or abroad
- Holidays that overlap the beginning or the end of term
- Visiting family or friends who have different half term holiday dates
- Family weddings for more than 2 days or visits to see family abroad
- Relatives coming to visit

January, 2018