



BUGLAWTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Be the Best We Can

Attendance Policy

Members of staff responsible:	Miss A Kennerley/Mr R Jervis
Governor Committee:	Leadership and Management
Date approved by the full Governing body:	Summer 2021
Date to be reviewed:	Summer 2023

Buglawton Primary School believes that to ensure our pupils gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly and on time every day that the school is open, unless their absence is unavoidable. Buglawton Primary School encourages all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to achieve excellent attendance and punctuality so that each and every pupil has the opportunity to “be the best we can”.

The following information shows the impact of reduced attendance on education:

Annual Attendance	Equivalent Days Lost	Equivalent Weeks Lost	Equivalent Lessons Missed
95%	9.5	2	50
90%	19	3.8	100
85%	28.5	5.7	150
80%	38	7.6	200

As a school, we aim to:

- Maintain a whole school attendance rate of a minimum of 96%.
- Raise and maintain awareness of parents/carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child’s education.
- Work in partnership with pupils and parents/carers so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.
- Maintain our attendance registers in accordance with Local Authority policy.
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognizing achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- Target the attendance monitoring of identified, vulnerable children.
- Reward children for 100% attendance through termly certificates and annual trophies. Efforts are also made to recognize pupils whose attendance has improved, or has been as good as it possibly could be.
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance.

What school expects from parents:

- Telephoning on the first morning of all absences by 9:00am with the reason for the absence and saying when you think the child will return.
- Arranging dental and doctor’s appointments out of school hours or during school breaks.
- Keeping the school updated by telephone or email if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.

Actions school will take:

- If the school has not received notification from the parent regarding an absence, they will endeavour, where possible, to telephone the parent by 9:30am.
- If the parent does not answer and does not provide a reasonable explanation for the absence within 24 hours, the absence will be unauthorized.
- Remind parents of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters, Home-School agreement, attendance bulletins.
- Acknowledge and reward both good and improved attendance, celebrating them as a whole school and individual classes.
- Let parents know if school has concerns regarding their child's attendance. If the school continues to have concerns, make a referral to the Education Welfare service for advice/action.

Authorised Absence

An absence is classified as authorized when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent telephones the school to explain the absence on the first day of absence **before 9:00am**.

We realise that there are rare occasions when there might be other circumstances or difficulties that causes your child to be absent. Please let us know and we shall try to deal with it sympathetically.

Unauthorised Absence

The Education Act, 1996, states that "If a child of compulsory school age is a registered pupil at a school fails to attend regularly at the school, his parent is guilty of an offence". Furthermore, the 2013 amendment to the Act, stated that "leave of absence shall not be granted by schools unless there are "exceptional circumstances"". The school must adhere to this amendment and will not authorize any absence, unless it is deemed, by the Headteacher, to be exceptional. For clarity, the following reasons for absence will NOT be authorized:

- No explanation has been given for the absence.
- The school is not satisfied with the explanation for absence.
- Because the parent/carer or the person who normally brings the child to school is ill.
- Waiting at home for a delivery.
- Going shopping or for a haircut.
- Going for a family day out.
- Because it is your child's or any other family member's birthday.
- Sleeping in for any reason.
- Treating headlice.
- Inadequate school uniform.
- Problems with transport.
- Unauthorised term time holidays.

When considering absence from school, it should be noted that there are 190 school days per year, leaving 175 non-school days (including weekends) for activities such as holidays, visiting family, friends, appointment, etc.

There is an expectation to report all unauthorised absences to the Local Authority. If a child has 10 or more unauthorised absences (i.e. 10 sessions, or 5 days as there are 2 sessions per day) over a period of 2 rolling half terms, the school may instruct the Local Authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. Please see below for penalties:

At 6-8 unauthorised absences the school will send a letter to each parent / carer to advise that if there are 10 unauthorised absences an Attendance and Children Out of School Team (ACOOS) referral for a 15-day warning period will be made, resulting in penalty notice if there is an unauthorised absence in the advised time period.

Following a series of 10 unauthorised absences schools make a Penalty Notice Warning Period request to the Attendance and Children Out of School Team (ACOOS) alongside evidence of the contact made and support offered to family to increase attendance.

Penalties for Unauthorised Absence		
Timeline	One Child	Two Children
Paid within 21 days	£60 per parent as per the definition in the Education Act, section 576	£60 per child = £120 per parent
After 21 days and before	£120 per parent	£120 per child =£240 per parent
After 28 days	A summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your child's regular attendance	A summons to appear before the Magistrates' Court on the grounds you have failed to secure your children's regular attendance

Please note – it is the responsibility of the parent to check the school's holiday timetable prior to booking any holiday. If holiday dates are not published on the school website, clarification should be sought with the school before booking.

In the exceptional circumstance where holiday is approved, the Headteacher can determine the length of the authorised absence.

If leave of absence is authorised, this does not set precedent for future absence requests; each application is made on a case by case basis.

If a parent wishes to apply for term time leave of absence, they should contact the school office for the relevant form.

Punctuality

If a child is late for 5 minutes each day, they miss 3 days of school each year. If they are 15 minutes late each day, they miss 2 weeks each school year.

When children arrive on time:

- Registration takes place quickly and smoothly
- The children are engaged in a classroom activity
- The day gets off to a good start for everyone
- Everyone hears the information given and is included in important explanations and discussions. This ensures that everyone knows what to do and what is expected from them
- The children have an opportunity to mix socially before learning begins

When children arrive late:

- It interrupts everyone's concentration
- It wastes valuable learning time for the whole class
- The teacher has to repeat information/instructions whilst others have to wait
- The late child is at an immediate disadvantage because they may have missed important teaching points, missed discussions where ideas are shared and will be generally unsettled
- Children are not ready to start their learning in the same way as their peers.

Morning registration is at 8:45am. Classroom doors are all open at 8:35am to enable children to access their classrooms and settle for the day. If children arrive after 8:45am, parents must accompany their children to the school office to sign them in.

Registers close at 9:05am. If a child arrives after the close of registers, their absence will not be authorised

unless school is absolutely satisfied that there is a legitimate reason for the child being late. Such reasons will not include sleeping in, alarm clock not going off, missing a bus, bad traffic, clothes in washing machine/not dry, another member of the family is ill, lost shoes or treatment for head lice.

The school will commit to conducting a “late gate” every week and address their concerns with parents as and when necessary.

Children who are persistently late for school, but before the registers close, will be monitored closely. Parents will be asked to supply adequate reasons for the lateness. If persistent lateness continues for a period of one month after the parents have been alerted of concerns, school will contact the Education Welfare Service.

All children must be collected at 3pm (or 4pm if attending an extra-curricular club); our staff have a variety of commitments after school – running clubs, staff meetings and courses and it should not be assumed that they are available to supervise children after this time. If a child is not collected on time, then they will be taken to the After School Club and parents will be charged accordingly.

Monitoring of Attendance

The school assesses individual and whole school attendance on a weekly basis. In the case of persistent absence or lates, the school will contact the parent concerned and discuss how they can work together to improve attendance. If no improvement is seen, the school will contact the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and arrange a meeting with the parent, the EWO and the school. If no improvement is made, the Education Welfare Service may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. In certain circumstances, including when a child has had 10 or more absences due to illness in a rolling 2 half terms, the school will ask for medical evidence of illness.

Monitoring of Absence

Absence will be monitored in the following way:

Event	Timing	Action	Responsibility
Absence	Day 1	Parent phones in before 9:00am.	Parent
Absence	Day 1	School phones home if no report of absence.	School (Office)
Absence	Day 1	School phones all contacts if residing parent is not contactable	School (Office)
Absence	Day 1	In certain circumstances, and at the discretion of the Headteacher, a door knock will be carried out by a member of the Senior Leadership Team	School (Senior Leadership Team)

Attendance will be monitored weekly, half termly and annually. When there are concerns over punctuality and attendance, parents/carers will be contacted to attend a meeting in school.

Children Missing in Education

When pupils leave and we have not been given information regarding their new school, and we cannot contact parents/carers, then the child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the Local Authority has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which may include liaising with Children’s Services the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate your child.

By giving us the above information, unnecessary investigations can be avoided.

Signed by: Miss A Kennerley (Headteacher)

Signed by: Mr G Hayes (Chair of Governors)

Appendix 1 – Letter to be sent home after 6-8 unauthorised absences

Dear **insert parent name**

It has been brought to my attention that your child has not been attending regularly at school. According to the Attendance Register, **insert child's name** attendance is currently **insert %**, this is below the schools expected attendance.

Insert child's name currently has **xx** unauthorised sessions, if this reaches 10 authorised sessions within 2 half terms then school can apply to the Local Authority to issue you with a Penalty Notice warning period, which could result in each parent receiving a £60.00 fine, increasing to £120.00 if not paid within 21 days.

I must remind you that S.444, Education Act 1996 requires you to make sure that your child comes to school, on time, every time the school is open. I am writing this letter to give you an opportunity to make sure that from now on and in future, your child attends school regularly.

If your child continues not attend regularly, I will have to refer you to the Local Authority and they may decide to pursue further action. These interventions may include,

(A) Issuing you with a Fixed Penalty Notice under S.444A Education Act 1996 which will make you liable to a penalty of up to £120. (As above)

(B) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1) Education

Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you may be fined up to £1000.

(C) Initiating legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court under S.444(1A) Education Act 1996. If convicted of this offence you may be fined up to £2,500 or be sent to prison for up to 3 months or both.

In order to avoid Local Authority intervention, please ensure your child attends school regularly and on time.

If there are any issues that may be impacting on your child's attendance, please contact school to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

Miss A Kennerley
Headteacher