

Policy reviewed January 2009
Policy reviewed July 2013

ST BERTELINE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Rationale

This policy outlines the underlying philosophy, purpose, nature, organisation and management of pupil attendance at St Berteline's C of E Aided Primary School.

Principles

The Governors, Headteacher and staff wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

1. Fully participate in school life.
2. Enjoy and achieve.
3. Feel a valued member of the school community.

Aims

- To ensure that the number of children with persistent absence (national average currently 4.4% primary, 3.1% secondary) reduces.
- To achieve at least 96% attendance (national average currently 95.6% primary and 94.1% secondary).
- To identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence causes concern.
- To identify pupils persistently absent from school (those below 90%).
- To track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress.
- To identify main causes of absence and take action to address them.

Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs a child might have.

Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

Parents must:

- Contact school on first day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance.

- Update the school on the third day of non attendance if the absence is expected to continue.
- Request leave of absence in term time by following the leave of absence policy procedures. (See separate policy.)
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance.

School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

The Headteacher is the school attendance leader. As the attendance leader of the school she will ensure:

- Registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration, England) Regulations 2006 and The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.
- A whole school approach to reinforce good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and achieve.
- Individuals or group attendance targets are set and understood by staff, parents and pupils.

Registration

Parents should ensure pupils are in school for 8.55 am for morning registration and 1.00 pm for afternoon registration.

A pupil arriving after 9.15 am will be marked late.

Parents whose children are persistently arriving after 9.15 am on a number of occasions will be invited into school to discuss the lateness and seek a resolution. Where school action fails to bring about an improvement, the matter will be discussed with the Education Welfare Service and intervention measures will be activated.

Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The parent must provide an explanation for any period of absence from school, it is the responsibility of the Headteacher to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised.

School will usually authorise absences where a pupil is:

- ✓ Unable to attend school due to illness.
- ✓ Requires emergency dental/medical appointments. Wherever possible routine dental/medical appointments should be made after school or during school holidays.
- ✓ Absent due to other exceptional circumstances. (Please refer to Leave of Absence Policy).

School may request medical verification where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%

School Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance

School will:

- Support all families in ensuring their child/children have an acceptable level of attendance bearing in mind individual circumstances.
- Contact parents on first day of a pupil's absence, where no notification has been received by 10.00 am to ensure the safety of the pupil.
- Analyse individual attendance pupil data to identify patterns of absence causing concern.
- Contact parents by letter when pupils' attendance falls below 90% to highlight concerns.
- Invite parents to an Attendance Meeting with the Headteacher, Education Welfare Officer, Class Teacher, where the level of attendance is not acceptable.
- Consider referral to Education Welfare when school action has failed to bring about an improvement in the pupil's attendance.
- Use Individual Attendance Support Plans for pupils with attendance difficulties.
- Use Parenting Contracts where exclusion or behavioural issues are affecting a pupil's attendance in school.
- In partnership with LA use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions, to support improvement to attendance.
- Provide appropriate support to pupils to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence.
- Complete a Common Assessment (CAF) where complex and significant factors requiring a multi-agency response is identified.
- Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through parents evenings, pupil reviews and home-school agreements.
- Provide a full and diverse curriculum to engage and motivate pupils, including use of SEAL to promote emotional well-being.
- Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment.

Persons Responsible for Attendance in St Berteline's C of E Aided Primary School

Headteacher – attendance leader.

Designated attendance officer – monitors attendance and flags up concerns to the Headteacher

First day contact link – Secretary.

Governor with special responsibility for attendance – Headteacher.

Review of Policy

- This policy will be formally reviewed every 2 years.
- This policy will be less formally reviewed on an annual basis.
- The policy will be referred to with all parents of children who are starting at St Berteline's.
- A copy of this policy is available on the school website.
- The principles of this policy will be raised in the school newsletter regularly throughout the year.
- Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Headteacher in the first instance.