



Reviewed September 2024

## 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 Bertelina'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

- Maintain a whole school culture that promotes the benefits of good attendance
- To ensure that the number of children with persistent absence reduces.
- To achieve at least the national average for overall attendance.
- 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.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers.

#### Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on [working together to improve school attendance \(applies from 19 August 2024\)](#) and [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#).

The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of the [Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of the [Education Act 2002](#)

- Part 7 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, and 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

It also refers to:

- [School census guidance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools](#)

## **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 filling in a 'Request Leave of Absence Form' from the school office.
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance.
- Book medical appointments around the school day where possible.

## **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.
- Data is regularly monitored proactively to identify groups/cohorts with, or at risk of, low attendance
- Strategies are developed to support where needed.

## Registration

### Attendance register

We will keep an electronic attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark, using the appropriate national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024, whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See Appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity, where a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances, where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school day starts at 8.50am when the school doors open, the school gates open at 8.45am. The school day ends at 3.20pm.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00am and will be kept open until 9.15am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.00pm and will be kept open until 1.15pm.

## **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 (minimum 48 hours absence for vomiting and diarrhoea following UK Health, Safety Agency guidance).
- ✓ 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

**Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as an event or problem you did not expect, although no list can be exhaustive, and requests need to be discussed with the Headteacher.**

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

As a leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, it is unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least two weeks before the absence. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

### **Sanctions**

Our school will make use of the full range of potential sanctions - including, but not limited to, those listed below - to tackle poor attendance. Decisions will be made on an individual, case-by-case basis.

### **Penalty Notices**

The local authority can fine parent/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age, by issuing a Penalty Notice.

If the school issues a Notice to Improve, it will check with the local authority before doing so, and send a copy to them so they can issue the Penalty Notice as appropriate.

Before issuing a Notice to Improve, the school will consider the individual case, including:

- Whether the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks)

- Whether a Penalty Notice is the best available tool to improve attendance for that pupil
- Whether further support or another legal intervention would be a more appropriate solution
- Whether any obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 make issuing a Penalty Notice inappropriate

A Penalty Notice may also be issued where parent/carers allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification, during the first 5 days of a suspension or exclusion (where the school has notified the parent/carers that the pupil must not be present in a public place on that day).

Each parent/carers who is liable for the pupil's offence(s) can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually only be the parent/carers/parent/carers who allowed the absence.

The payment must be made directly to the local authority, regardless of who issues the notice. If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If issued with a **first** Penalty Notice, the parent/carers must pay £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

If a **second** penalty notice is issued to the same parent/carers in respect of the same pupil, the parent/carers must pay £160 if paid within 28 days.

A **third** penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent/carers in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the issue of the first Penalty Notice. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken instead.

### **Notices to improve**

If the national threshold for a Penalty Notice has been met and support is appropriate, but parent/carers do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parent/carers a final chance to engage with support.

Notices to improve will be issued in line with processes set out in the local code of conduct for the local authority area in which the pupil attends school.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parent/carers under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far

- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance doesn't improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a Penalty Notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

## **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.
- 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 suspension or behavioral 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 Multi-Agency Plan (MAP) 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 parent's 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 - Attendance Officer/Business Manager.

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.

## Attendance Codes

Code	Meaning	Type
/ \	Present at the school / morning \ afternoon	Present Mark
B	Attending any other approved educational activity - Alternative Provision not arranged through the approved framework	Present Mark
C	Authorised Circumstance (see next page for breakdown)	Authorised Absence
D	Dual registered at another school - Attending Sheffield Inclusion Centre - Attending Alternative Provision at another school site - Chapel House / Becton Outreach / CAMHS Lodges - Hospital education - Education at a secure / residential site - Off-site direction / managed move	Present Mark
E	Suspended or permanently excluded and no alternative provision made	Authorised Absence
G	Holiday not granted by the school or Term Time Leave not granted by the school	Unauthorised Absence
I	Illness (not medical or dental appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Leave of absence for the purpose of attending an interview for employment or for admission to another educational institution	Authorised Absence
K	Attending education provision arranged by the Local Authority - Home Tutoring - Approved Framework for Alternative Provision - Blended Learning	Present Mark
L	Late arrival before the registers have closed	Present Mark
M	Attended a medical appointment	Authorised Absence
N	Reason for absence not yet established	Unauthorised Mark
O	Absent in other or unknown circumstances	Unauthorised Absence
P	Participating in a sporting activity	Present Mark
Q	Unable to attend the school because of a lack of access arrangements	Not expected to attend
R	Religious Observance	Authorised Absence
S	Leave of absence for the purpose of studying for a public examination. Must be used sparingly with revision opportunities in school.	Authorised Absence
T	Parent travelling for occupational purposes, and the pupil has attended for at least 200 sessions in preceding 12 months.	Authorised Absence
U	Arrived in school after registration closed	Unauthorised Absence
V	Attending an Educational Trip or Visit	Present Mark
W	Attending Work Experience	Present Mark
X	Non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	Not expected to attend
Y	Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause (see next page for breakdown)	Not expected to attend
Z	Prospective or previous pupil not on admission register	Not expected to attend



# Attendance Codes

Code	Meaning	Type
<b>The Y code: Unable to attend school because of unavoidable cause, is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:</b>		
Y1	Unable to attend due to transport normally provided not being available	Not expected to attend
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread disruption to travel	Not expected to attend
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed. For example, this may be due to damage or teacher strikes.	Not expected to attend
Y4	Unable to attend due to the whole school site being unexpectedly closed. For example, extreme weather, damage, no hot water, or heating.	Not expected to attend
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention. For example, in police detention, remanded to youth detention, awaiting trial or sentencing, or detained under a sentence of detention.	Not expected to attend
Y6	Unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law, contrary to or prohibited by any guidance relating to the incidence or transmission of infection or disease.	Not expected to attend
Y7	Unable to attend because of any other unavoidable cause. For example, an emergency has prevented the pupil from attending. The unavoidable cause must be something that affects the pupil, not just the parent.	Not expected to attend
<b>The C code: Authorised Absence is broken down into the following sub codes to provide better differentiation of the reason:</b>		
C	Leave of absence for exceptional circumstances. Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion.	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave of absence for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad.	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave of absence for a compulsory school age pupil subject to a part-time timetable.	Authorised Absence