



Burnley Road Academy Attendance Policy

Introduction

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the education of all pupils. The School's ethos demonstrates that children feel that their presence in school is important, that they are missed when they are absent or late. The School will take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the policy.

What are the risks of missing a day of school?

Every moment in school counts, and days missed add up quickly. The higher a pupil's attendance, the more they are likely to learn, and the better they are likely to have better outcomes and go on to perform better in exams and formal assessments.

Data from 2019 shows that 84% of Key Stage 2 pupils who had 100% attendance achieved the expected standard, compared to 40% of pupils who were persistently absent across the key stage.

Aims

- To maximise attendance of all children
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and to work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty
- To analyse attendance data regularly to inform future policy and practice
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Education Welfare Service and multi-agency teams

School Attendance and the Law

In addition to the information below, following public consultation earlier this year, and subject to Parliament, the Secretary of State has committed to further guidance becoming statutory when parliamentary time allows (this will be no sooner than September 2023). Link to guidance: [Working together to improve school attendance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/921447/Working_together_to_improve_school_attendance.pdf)

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority. The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is

provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 have removed all references to family holidays and leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application had been made in advance and the Headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence. This discretion has been removed by the aforementioned Regulations (2013). Whilst the Headteacher will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents must be aware that requests will normally be refused. Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time, the absence will be coded as unauthorised and a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent for each child (where 5 or more days of unauthorised absence are recorded as a result). If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice, in accordance with Government Guidance (£120 per parent, per child / £60 if paid within 21 days), where there have been 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence recorded. If this penalty is not paid, the Local Authority will instigate legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court. In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy

Headteacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately monitor pupil, group and whole school attendance patterns
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and / or punctuality is below target
- To provide Governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties
- To instigate First Day Calling procedures when necessary

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on the appropriate recording sheet
- To respond promptly to any issue raised in the weekly analysis of registers by office staff
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness

Office Staff

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the SIMS Attendance Manager System

- To monitor and track attendance patterns for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary
- To contact parents/carers by 10:30am on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason and alert the Headteacher of anyone who has not been in contact by that time.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Headteacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised

Education Welfare Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance – from September 2023, this includes guidance visits to schools 3 x per year (once per term) by a named officer to monitor, provide advice and take any action required in law. This may include providing targets, timeframes and – as a last resort – the issuing of penalty notices - for families to improve attendance. Recent guidance places a duty on Local Authorities to consider whether low attendance is as a result of neglect. If officers deem this to be the case, they will make a referral to Social Care.

Administration

The School uses Attendance Manager provided by ARBOR to manage and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance. Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are returned to the School Office after the closure of the registration period. Failure to complete a register accurately constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

Absence

Lateness

- Pupils arriving after 8:45am but before 9:15am will be considered as late
- Pupils arriving late must report to the School Office so that their attendance can be recorded
- Pupils arriving after 9.15 am will be officially absent for the morning session. This will be considered an un-authorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given, for example a doctor's appointment

Action to address lateness will be taken in line with the school's strategy to improve punctuality (see flowchart – appendix 1) .

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence to provide the reason for the absence and where possible on each subsequent day of absence
- Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will ensure that contact is made with the family on the first day. Office staff will use all contacts numbers they hold in school to locate the child. If the family cannot be contacted, the EWO will be contacted and asked to visit the house. This is in line with First Day Calling Procedures – recommendations issued to schools in 2017.

If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the Headteacher should be informed.

Medical or Dental Appointments

- Absence from school due to a medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours

Leave of Absence

Headteachers cannot authorise any leave of absence during term time unless they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances to warrant the granting of leave.

Communication and Reporting to Parents and Carers

At the induction meetings for children about to join the school, the importance of regular attendance is discussed and explained. At this initial meeting parents and carers are asked to arrange their family holidays within school holidays, rather than in term time so that their children's education is not disrupted. The school's policy relating to authorisation of holidays is also communicated to parents.

When children join our school at other times of the year, the importance of regular attendance is discussed with parents.

If attendance falls below expected levels, contact will be made with parents/carers (see flowchart - appendix 1).

All absences will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

Children who achieve 100% attendance at the end of the year are presented with an attendance prize and weekly attendance is celebrated in assembly.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Attendance data will be monitored weekly to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include children with:

- Incomplete weeks
- Monday and Friday absences
- Lateness
- Periods of extended absence
- Periods of un-authorised absence
- All children with attendance below 97%

This data will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) as part of the regular meetings. The Headteacher and EWO will discuss the impact of the School's Attendance Policy and the strategies used to promote good attendance annually. The Headteacher will recommend an attendance target to the Governors. The Governors will review this bi-annually.

Appendix 1

