



# BERSTED GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

## Attendance Policy

School Improvement priorities: **Achieve; Care; Enrich, Enliven and value Enterprise.**

### Aim to:

- Value and support pupils to, in their day to day lives and learning, demonstrate our core values:  
*Resilience - Compassion - Responsibility - Respect - Honesty - Perseverance - Collaboration - Communication - Achievement - Flexibility - Creativity - Courage*
  - enable our pupils to be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve in their learning, make a positive contribution towards achieving economic well-being and being able to make choices about their employment in the future.
  - Pupils will make secure progress through appropriate expectations in an interesting, calm and positive learning environment.
  - Pupils will behave appropriately and be safe and confident in a range of social and educational settings and situations.
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- Policy
  - Appendices:
    - Locality protocol - New attendance rules parents need to know
    - Attendance percentage cause for concern letter
    - Request for absence in exceptional circumstances
    - Response to exceptional circumstances
    - WSCC Fixed penalty notices
    - Absence explanation and codes (DfE pages 76-91)
    - WSCC September 2024 changes
    - DfE Working together to improve school attendance
    - Public health guidance on infection control in schools

**Bersted Green Primary School places a high priority on excellent pupil attendance and punctuality.**

**In order for children to achieve their potential, pupils must be keen and eager to attend school and regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives. To achieve this, the Governing Body and staff are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that the school achieves a MINIMUM of 96% attendance throughout the school. This is tracked each week by SLT and monitored each half term by SLT and Governing Body with comparisons to national data.**

This policy applies to all children registered at our school and is available to view on our school website. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure good attendance at school. The Headteacher and governors also work closely with other professionals and agencies to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens. The policy will be applied fairly and consistently.

**Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning and develop large educational gaps which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.**

Individual pupil absence is checked each week. A child whose attendance drops to 90% or below each year, will over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Absence also means children miss lessons and this can lead to gaps in learning or understanding and certainly impacts on children falling behind as well as on friendships.

### **Aims and Objectives**

This attendance policy has been written to ensure that all staff and governors of our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance and that parents/carers are aware of the procedures they need to follow when their child is absent from school.

School Procedures - we will aim to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

- To maintain appropriate registration processes;
- To maintain appropriate attendance data;
- To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, governors, parents and pupils;
- To collate daily information of any absences or lateness;
- To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school - this includes home visits;
- To inform parents/carers of circumstances that constitute authorised and unauthorised absence;
- To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time;
- To work with parents to improve individual pupil attendance and punctuality;
- To liaise with the Pupil Entitlement Team regarding any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to the schools attempts to contact them or to put in place initiatives recommended by the school to help improve attendance;
- To report attendance statistics to the PEI Team as and when requested;

All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Headteacher.

School will check **public health guidance** to confirm whether a child needs to be absent from school.

### **Parent/Carer Procedures and Absence Reporting**

If a child for any reason is unable to attend school, parents/carers are required to inform the school on the morning of each absence before 9:30am. There are a number of ways in which this can be done.

Option 1 - Telephone the school and leave a message on the absence reporting line.

Option 2 - Use MCAS or email [office@berstedgreen.school](mailto:office@berstedgreen.school) to log a child's absence.

Option 3 - Speak with a member of the office team on the morning of the absence after 8am.

### **Definitions of absence**

#### **Authorised absence**

- An absence is classed as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason such as illness and the school has received notification from the parent/carers. The school may request proof of a doctor's visit if they feel this is required as part of the recording process. Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated a number of periods of absence due to illness, the school may write to the parents/carers to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness. This evidence could be a Doctor's note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission for the school to make their own enquiries.
- If a child is absent for an exceptional circumstance/religious reason that has been pre-approved by the Headteacher. (An absence authorisation request form must be completed in both cases, prior to the period of absence. See appendices)

#### **Unauthorised absence**

- An absence is classed as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school or the failure of the parent/carers to inform the school of the reason for absence.
- If a pupil remains absent without prior consent and contact has not been made with the parents/carers within 10 days, the absence will be reported to the Pupil Entitlement Team.

### **School Procedures for Recording and Monitoring Attendance**

The school day is 8.45-3.15 for YR, Y1 and Y2 and the day ends at 3.20 for KS2. Class doors open at 8.40 am to give children time to get organised ready for the school day. The class teacher will take a register recording who is present and absent from school before 9.00 am each morning. All late pupils will then enter the school through the main entrance. If a pupil arrives late the office staff will make a note in the attendance diary. All staff need to be aware that any child arriving late **MUST** register at the office for the purposes of fire regulations.

Registration - The register officially closes at 9:00am and any pupil arriving after this will be marked as late up until 9:30am. From 9:30am onwards a pupil will be marked as absent for the session. A reason for the lateness will need to be provided and a decision made by the school to mark it as an authorised or unauthorised absence. During the morning any absences will be recorded onto bromcom.

Making contact - If no reason has been given for an absence the office team will try to make contact with the parent/carer, to ascertain the reason for absence. Half a school day of absence is classed as 1 session missed.

Monitoring - Pupil attendance is regularly monitored and those that fall 95% or below are highlighted to the Headteacher for continued monitoring and action. Where persistent incidents of lateness/absence have been identified parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will request a meeting with the parent/carer to agree action points for improvement. They also miss early morning pre-teaching and intervention activities.

As a school we expect our pupils to be punctual and on time so that they learn the importance of this life skill. Children who arrive late miss valuable learning time and disrupt the flow of lessons.

Parents of pupils who have been absent from school and this absence has been recorded by the school as unauthorised for the total of 5 days or more (10 sessions), can be issued with a penalty notice and this incurs a fine (please note that half a school day is classed as 1 session absence).

### **Dentist/Doctors/Hospital Appointments**

Where reasonably possible all appointments should be made out of school hours. If this is not possible then the appointment card must be brought into school on the day of the appointment so that a copy can be taken for the attendance records.

### **Parental Request for Absence from School**

In line with The Department for Education guidelines, school are unable to authorise any absence requests during term time unless exceptional circumstances can be shown. It is at the Headteachers discretion, based on their assessment of the situation if an absence request is exceptional and this can vary from school to school. If you need to make a request for absence an Absence Request Form will need to be completed and submitted to the Headteacher. (See appendices)

There is no entitlement to take a child out of school for a family holiday. A week's absence for holiday and a week's absence for illness would give an attendance figure below 95%. The government considered attendance unacceptable below 95%.

The Felpham and Bognor Locality of schools follow the same absence protocols and so give the same messages relating to attendance and to absence.

### **Safeguarding**

Children who remain disengaged from education are potentially exposed to higher degrees of risk. Children who go missing or run away from home or care may be in serious danger and are vulnerable to crime, sexual exploitation or abduction as well as missing education

The NSPCC has cited, 'failure to ensure regular school attendance which prevents the child reaching their full potential academically' as one of their six forms of neglect.

Non-Attendance to school or unauthorised attendance, can result in safeguarding action. This is because persistent absenteeism and sudden changes in patterns of attendance and pupil behaviour, are a key indication that something is wrong and could lead to sudden extended absences. School may undertake a welfare check.

## Support for absence

- School rewards classes with 100% attendance each week;
- 100% bands or badges are given to individual children periodically;
- Teachers will work with children who have been absent to try to help them to catch up with the rest of the class;
- Staff will talk to children, parents and carers about absence and try and find solutions;
- If parents are concerned about attendance please contact the office at school to talk to us and tell us about the difficulties or particular barriers; If you would rather, please talk to class teachers or to staff members 'on the gate';
- Where possible and appropriate, school will try to help parents by offering support or referring them to additional support services;
- Support may need to be formalised in conjunction with West Sussex to reduce severe or persistent absence.

<b>PERFECT</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0 absences</b>
<b>IMPRESSIVE</b>	<b>98% attendance or better</b>	<b>4 days per year or less</b>
<b>GREEN</b> good	pupils with attendance between 100% and 96%	7 days or less per year
<b>AMBER</b> coasting	pupils with attendance between 95% and 89%	8 days to a month per year
<b>RED</b> danger zone	pupils with attendance below 90%	Over a month during the year - persistent absence where a pupil misses 10% or more of school
<b>SERIOUS</b>	Pupils with attendance 80% or below	2 months or more over the year
<b>SEVERE</b>	Missing 50% of school	'Severe persistent absence'

