

Bleasby Church of England Primary School



Attendance Policy

Adopted: October 2022

Last Review date: October 2022

Next Review Date: October 2024

Contents

1. Aims	2
2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. Roles and Responsibilities	3
4. Recording attendance.....	4
5. Authorised and unauthorised absence.....	7
6. Strategies for promoting attendance	8
7. Attendance monitoring	8
8. Monitoring arrangements	10
9. Links with other policies	10
Appendix 1: attendance codes	10

1. Aims

At Bleasby School we know that good attendance both underpins and is supported by our ABC values to *Achieve* and fully *Belong*, children need to be in school. Our work on attendance is also essential to safeguarding the wellbeing of children in our care.

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Making sure all children want to come to school everyday
- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting 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 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The Local Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

3.2 The Head Teacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Takes the role of 'designated senior leader responsible for attendance'

3.3 The Designated Senior Leader for Attendance

The role of the designated senior leader for attendance is fulfilled by our head teacher.

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having an oversight of data analysis
- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance is Russyn Cast and can be contacted via 01636 830203 office@bleasbyprimary.org.uk

3.4 The Attendance Officer

The role of the attendance officer is fulfilled by our Office Manager. The attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher/[role] (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Max Meaden and can be contacted via 01636 830203 office@bleasbyprimary.org.uk

3.5 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office after the close of registers daily.
- Raising any concerns relating to a child's attendance with the Head Teacher.
- Passing on any information regarding a child's absence or lateness to the Head Teacher.
- Providing a safe and welcoming environment for every child.
- Giving children avenues to raise any worries they may have.

3.6 School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents and carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer/refer calls from parents where the school has identified a need to monitor or where the reason for absence raises a concern to the head teacher in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day, unless there is an agreed reason for absence. (see section 5)
- Ensure that they are able to bring their child to school on time every day.
- Call the school office 01636830203 to report their child's absence before 9:00am on the day of the absence and advise when they are expected to return. If the expected date changes, school should be informed before 8:50 on the day of the change.
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Give positive messages to their children about being in school on time every day.

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, on time. Unless there is an agreed reason for absence (see 5.1)

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an 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 at the start of the afternoon session. It will mark 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:

- For pupils of compulsory school age, whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if 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 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:50 on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55 and will be kept open until 9:30. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:05 and will be kept open until 1:35.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8:50 or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

We encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised if the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. The school should be notified via the office either in person or via a phone call 01636830203.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

Learning begins as soon as the children are in the classroom – children who are late miss valuable learning time. This will have a significant on the achievement of children who are regularly or frequently late. Late arrival of children also disrupts learning for the rest of this class.

A pupil who arrives late:

- Must report to the office, with the person who brought them to school
- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Lateness will be monitored and the following action taken:

- Where possible, when arriving late, parents and/or children will be reminded of the time to arrive in school, asked why they are late and offered support if needed.
- Where lateness is **regular** (on the same day for 3 or more days in a term), or **frequent** (more than 3 days in one week, or more than 5 days in a term), a letter will be sent reminding parents and carers of the importance of punctuality at school and giving advice for arriving on time. An attendance concern will be logged.
- Where lateness is repeated following a letter, this will be followed up by a meeting with the head teacher to discuss barriers to punctuality and agree solutions.
- Where lateness is repeated following a phone-call, parents/carers will be requested to attend a meeting with the head teacher to agree a way forward to ensuring the child is able to arrive at school on time.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.

If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may enquire with friends and neighbours, make a visit to the pupil's home, contact the police, the child's social worker (where relevant) or contact the Nottinghamshire 'Children Missing In Education Officer', Glenn Scrooby.

- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session

- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider refer to the MASH.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels via half termly emails or in person when attending a parents' evening, including ScholarPack summary sheets where more detail is needed.

All parents receive a ScholarPack summary sheet of their child's attendance with the annual school report.

Where a letter of concern is sent, this will be accompanied by a ScholarPack summary sheet.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least six weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the office, or the website [School Forms | Bleasby CofE Primary School \(bleasbyprimary.org.uk\)](https://bleasbyprimary.org.uk). The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.
- Other possible 'exceptional circumstances' where the headteacher may grant term-time holiday, for example an experience only possible during term time due to a period of serious illness or disability, a necessary family experience due to terminal illness, funerals requiring travel.

5.2 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

Bleasby School works with Nottinghamshire Council to the Nottinghamshire Code of Conduct, which states:

“If the unauthorised absence is in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) over a 6 week rolling period then the school can issue or ask the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom persistent absence applies.”

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

- In our weekly Rainbow Assembly, to which parents are invited, the class with the highest attendance is named and rewarded with hosting ‘Barny’ for the coming week.
- The winning class attendance and the school average for the week is recorded on the ‘What’s happening this week board’.
- At the end of each term, children with 100% attendance receive a certificate.
- Attendance is a feature on each half-termly newsletter.
- Children are welcomed on arrival at the gate each morning.

7. Attendance monitoring

- Short-term attendance is monitored by the office manager through awareness of children who are arriving late, taking absence calls, chasing up unreported absences and through inputting of register data. Concerns are reported to the head teacher and logged.
- The attendance of children who have been logged as a possible concern for attendance is monitored daily by the office manager and class teacher who will inform the head teacher of further absence or lateness. Data will be reviewed for trends.
- Patterns in attendance between classes are identified through weekly review by the head teacher. Concerns in class attendance are discussed with the class teacher.
- Whole school attendance is reviewed weekly against national by the head teacher.

- School attendance is analysed half termly with an overview presented at the full governor meeting. Trends and comparison to the previous year and primary schools nationally are reported.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers and school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Send letters and make phone calls where children are at risk of reaching 'persistent absence' – where absence is on a recurring day, is unexplained or where there are 4 separate occasions of absence in one term

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum biennially by Russyn Cast At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Letter re Holiday Request

Dear **Name**,

Thank you for your **letter/e-mail/form** requesting to authorisation for **child** to be out of school from **dates**. Unfortunately, as you may be aware, family holidays in term time are not permitted unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Whilst I understand the circumstances outlined in your **letter/e-mail/form**, I am unable to authorise **child's** absence. The Nottinghamshire County Council School Attendance Code of Conduct states that, "An unauthorised leave of absence of more than 3 days (6 sessions) over a 6 week rolling period for the purpose of a family holiday can lead to you being issued with a penalty notice fine of up to £120 for each child who is absent. The fines can be issued to both parents for each child."

Should child's be absent a will be noted in the attendance register as "unauthorised", and, as it is for **number** days (**number** sessions) it may lead to a penalty notice (fine) being issued.

If you need any further information or wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Appendix 2: Letter re persistent lateness

Regular Lateness

Dear...

Because good attendance is so important to us and makes such a difference to the academic and social progress of the children, at Bleasby we carry our checks on punctuality and get in touch when a child has been late on 5 or more occasions. Where lateness is **regular** (on the same day for 3 or more days in a term), or frequent (more than 3 days in one week), or more than 5 days in

a term, a letter will be sent reminding parents and carers of the importance of punctuality at school and giving advice for arriving on time.

As of **date**, **child** had arrived late on **x** occasions, resulting in at least **x** minutes of missed education as well as disrupting the class.

We have attached a copy of **child's** attendance so that you can see when the latenesses have occurred. A U means... an L means...

The school gate opens at 9:40 with a member of staff outside to ensure everyone is safe.

This means that children can be on the playground ready for when the teachers lead them in at 9:50.

Breakfast Club is available from 9am every morning at a cost of £ per day – you may find that bringing **child** to this will enable you to miss the traffic and save you the time of making breakfast in the morning.

We look forward to seeing **child** on time every morning in future.

If you have any particular difficulties or concerns, please do get in touch with me.

Appendix 3: Letter re low attendance

Attendance below 90%

Dear...

Because good attendance is so important to us and makes such a difference to the academic and social progress of the children, at Bleasby we carry out checks on attendance levels each term and get in touch with parents when attendance has fallen below 90%.

As of the end of the Spring Term, **child's** attendance this academic year was at **x%**

We have attached a copy of **x's** attendance so that you can see what has caused the absences.

We understand that absence is sometimes unavoidable and continue to ask you to keep your child at home if:

- They are not well enough to be in school (in which case we don't expect them to complete school work at home).
- They have covid symptoms. Please follow the most up to date government guidance.
- They have been sick in the last 48 hours.

However, please do all you can to ensure **child's** attendance is high for the rest of the school year.

Please do get in touch if you would like to discuss any issues impacting on your child's attendance or if there is any way in which we can support you in raising it.

