

## BARLASTON C.E. (VC) FIRST SCHOOL

### “Let Your Light Shine”

#### Attendance Policy

#### Our Mission Statement

“This school is a place of learning, friendship and fun, in a context of Christian values and ethos. Where each person is uniquely valued and their gifts and potential are nurtured and developed”

#### Equality Statement

The school is committed to providing the full range of opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, social, cultural or religious background. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment, which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.

#### Dyslexia Statement

To ensure that children on the dyslexic spectrum have equal opportunities and that their diverse strengths are celebrated and built on.

## 1 Introduction

We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will reward those children whose attendance is very good. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## 2 Definitions

### Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent writes a note and telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents and carers do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents and carers will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

### **3 If a child is absent**

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school office, which will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.

A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

### **4 Requests for leave of absence**

#### **Leave of Absence in term time**

The head teacher will not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted at the discretion of the head.

#### **The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007**

From September 2013, penalty notices can be used where the pupil's absence has not been authorised by the school and fines imposed on parents. If a Penalty notice is served, parents must from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance policy notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecutions.

### **5 Long-term absence**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

### **6 Repeated unauthorised absences**

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents will be sent a letter, expressing our concerns. Should the situation continue, parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

## **7 Lateness**

Parents who bring their children to school late will be asked to complete the late book, giving a reason for the child's lateness. If the child is persistently late, a letter will be sent out expressing the schools concerns. Should this persist, the parents/ carers will be invited in for a meeting with the head teacher to discuss the problem.

## **8 Rewards for good attendance**

- 7.1 All children who have 100% attendance for one term will receive a certificate for attendance, awarded at a suitable assembly at the end of the term. All the children who have 100 per cent attendance in any one year will receive a certificate for attendance, awarded at the last church assembly of the year.

## **8 Attendance targets**

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.
- 8.2 Weekly attendance is celebrated and a tally chart is produced. A point is given on the chart each week for the class with the best weekly attendance.
- 8.3 Children who have 100% attendance are entered into a weekly lucky dip draw, and should their name be chosen, they are given a prize.

## **9 Monitoring and review**

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual governors' report.
- 9.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the headteacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.