



ATTENDANCE POLICY

1 **Rationale**

Regular attendance at school enables each pupil to fulfil their potential at all levels and represents a maximisation of educational potential within the community. Research links attendance with achievement, indicating that even occasional broken weeks can have a negative effect. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is the development of positive attitudes towards school. In promoting good attendance it is also hoped that this will lead to the development of habits of good attendance and punctuality for the future. 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 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.

2 **Purposes**

- 2.1 To ensure that parents/carers understand their duties to see that their children are present at school, for the morning and afternoon sessions, on the days that the school is open for pupils except where circumstances are deemed to constitute an authorised absence (*see 3.3*)
- 2.2 To ensure that teachers and other school staff are aware of the distinction between authorised and unauthorised absence and the procedures for recording and reporting such occurrences.
- 2.3 To enable action to be taken quickly where unexplained absence or regular lateness occurs.

3 **Guidelines**

- 3.1 Staff in charge of a class will call the register at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. Induction will include guidance to registration and marking attendance in School Information Management System (SIMS) Attendance module.

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.

- 3.2 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register with the code 'N', and the school office will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian straight away, in order to check on the safety of the child.

Attendance registers will show clearly whether an absence is authorised or un-authorised.

- 3.3 Absence can be authorised if:

- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by unavoidable cause.
- The absence occurs so that the pupil could take place in a religious observance set apart by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs.
- The school at which the child is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home and no suitable transport, boarding accommodation arrangements or alternative school placement have been made by the LEA.
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents/carers
- There is a family bereavement.
- The pupil is involved in an **exceptional** special occasion.

- 3.4 Absence will be counted as unauthorised if:

- No explanation is forthcoming. The school should be informed on the first day of any absence and the reason and expected length of absence given.
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation.
- The pupil stays at home to mind the house or look after siblings.
- The pupil is shopping during school hours.
- The pupil is absent for **unexceptional** special occasions.
- The pupil is away from school on a family holiday.

- 3.5 The registration period will be deemed to be:

Morning session: 09.00 - all Key Stages

Afternoon session: 12.45 - EYFS, 13.00 - KS2 and 13.15 - KS1

After these times the registers will be deemed to be closed.

Please note - during COVID attendance has been in line with DfE guidance.

Any arrival after these times will be regarded as late and marked accordingly. Late entries will be recorded on the schools SIMS, and in the 'Late' book and made available for inspection by the Local Authority.

- 3.6 Provisional marks (N) should be made in registers where the absence cannot be identified as authorised or unauthorised and amended at a later date by the office staff.
- 3.7 Rates of authorised and unauthorised absence will be published annually on the school website.

4. Lateness

- 4.1 Where **children are consistently late** (three or more times in two weeks in a term) or absences are unexplained/unauthorised the following procedure will be followed:
1. Parents/carers will be informed of the situation by a Parent Mentor.
 2. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences or continued lateness, a standard letter will be sent asking the parents/carers to visit the school and discuss the problem with the Parent Mentor.
 3. If the problem persists, the school will hold a School Attendance Meeting to clarify the nature of the lateness, offer support and to agree with parent's targets for improvement.
 4. Parents will be asked to sign the School Attendance Meeting (SAM) targets.
 5. The school will review the targets with the parents after an agreed timescale to ensure that the problem with lateness has been rectified.
- 4.2 Parents/carers should make every effort to arrange medical treatment and dental treatment outside school hours.

5. Sickness

- 5.1 If a child is sick and cannot attend school then the parent/carer must contact the school as early as possible on the first day of illness to notify the school of this.
- 5.2 Children who have illnesses which lead to diarrhoea or vomiting must not attend school until 48 hours after the last bout to avoid contagious viruses being spread.
- 5.3 Children need not be kept off school for minor illnesses, such as colds or coughs.
- 5.4 Where a child has to stay away from school for medical reasons for more than two weeks, the school will arrange for suitable work to be sent home or will liaise with the hospital education service as appropriate.

6. Leave of Absence (Incl. Holidays in term time)

The Government has made an amendment to the 2006 regulations on term time absence. Schools are now prohibited from authorising any leave in term time; unless there are exceptional circumstances.

We aim to work in partnership with parents, and we know that there are sometimes exceptional circumstances which mean absence may be required during term time. If a child requires exceptional circumstances leave, parent/carers must first ask permission from the headteacher, by completing and returning the 'request for authorisation for absence during term time' form. Parent/carers will be asked not to make arrangements or commitments for their child's absence before authorisation has been given.

Requests for exceptional circumstances leave will only be considered two weeks before the date of leave to enable the headteacher to consider the items below and no leave will be authorised retrospectively:

- How much education the child has already missed through illness or arriving late.
- What learning the child will miss at school
- The child's level of attainment.

- 6.1 There is no automatic right to leave of absence during term time and parents must complete a 'Request for a request for authorisation for absence during term time' form and submit to the school making any request prior to any leave.
- 6.2 No holiday absence will be authorised unless there are **exceptional circumstances** e.g. a forces family who cannot holiday together at any other point in the year.
- 6.2 Children with medical conditions, such as Autism, may be given leave of absence during term time to attend a family holiday where the school deems that their needs require a quiet environment where there are no crowds.
- 6.3 Where a leave of absence has not been authorised, should the parent/ carer still choose to take the child out of school, then this will be marked on the register as an 'Unauthorised Absence' and may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 6.4 A decision on whether to authorise a request for absence during term time will be made using the following criteria, in line with school guidelines:

Please note - during COVID attendance has been in line with DfE guidance.

- Percentage of attendance in current academic year
- Percentage of attendance in previous academic year
- Learning missed
- Current attainment

7. Use of Fixed Penalty Notices

- 7.1 Penalty Notices may be requested by the Head Teachers of all local authority maintained schools and academies in South Gloucestershire and will be issued and administered by South Gloucestershire Council.
- 7.2 They may be issued to one or both parents/carers regarding each of their children if more than 10 sessions (1 session equals either a morning or afternoon) of unauthorised absence are accumulated in a 7 week period (i.e. 70 sessions of possible attendance at school). A session is a morning or an afternoon. Any person with day to day care of the child may be issued with a Notice; this could include grandparents, step-parents and partners.
- 7.3 Unauthorised Holidays in term time may result in the school requesting a Fixed Penalty Notice on the 11th missed session (6th day of absence).
- 7.4 Other than for holidays in term time, the decision regarding the issue of a Penalty Notice will be taken as part of the legal process between the school and local authority (i.e. at Attendance Panels and Reviews).
- 7.5 The fine is £60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £120 if paid within 28 days. The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted - details of how to pay are printed on the Penalty Notice.
- 7.6 The full procedure for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices is available from the school office upon request.

8. Broken Weeks and low attendance

- 8.1 A 'broken week' is defined as a week where a child has missed one or more session of schooling.
- 8.2 Multiple broken weeks have been shown to have a significant impact on learning and the school monitors attendance data for this termly. Children who have three or more broken weeks in a 6 week period will be monitored closely and their parents informed. Where this level of broken weeks persists over two terms, parents will be invited to an attendance review meeting with a Parent Mentor.
- 8.3 Overall attendance data will be reviewed termly. Where attendance falls below 90% parents will be contacted via a standard letter and attendance will be closely monitored. Should attendance remain below 90% for two or more terms, parents will be asked to attend a School Attendance Meeting (SAM) with a Parent Mentor.
- 8.4 Should attendance not improve after an agreed timescale then the school will request a LA Attendance Review which is the first stage of formal legal proceedings.

9 Standard Letters

- Appendix A – Request for authorisation for absence.
- Appendix B – Broken weeks
- Appendix C – Less than 90%
- Appendix D – Number of lates
- Appendix E – Request for application reply to parent/carers

10. Attendance Targets

- 9.1 The school sets attendance targets each year and these are agreed by the senior staff and governors. 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.

11. Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of the appointed governors to monitor overall attendance termly, and the head give an annual report to Governors. The rates of attendance will be reported on the school website. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and seeing that it is carried out. The governing body will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

Updated	Term 3 2021
Leadership Ratification	Term 3 2021
Review Date	Term 3 2024

Please note - during COVID attendance has been in line with DfE guidance.



BEACON RISE PRIMARY SCHOOL

REQUEST FOR AUTHORISATION FOR ABSENCE

The Government has made an amendment to the 2006 regulations on term time absence. Schools are now prohibited from authorising any leave in term time; unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

We aim to work in partnership with parents, and we know that there are sometimes **exceptional circumstances** which mean absence may be required during term time. If your child requires **exceptional circumstances leave**, you must first ask permission from the headteacher, by completing and returning this form. Please do not make arrangements or commitments for your child's absence before authorisation has been given.

Requests for **exceptional circumstances leave** will only be considered two weeks before the date of leave to enable the headteacher to consider the items below and no leave will be authorised retrospectively:

- How much education your child has already missed through illness or arriving late.
- What learning your child will miss at school
- Your child's level of attainment.

When holiday is taken and the school has not authorised the absence, the school may request that the LA issues a Penalty Notice – more information available from www.beaconriseprimaryschool.co.uk, or hardcopy available from school office

Beacon Rise Primary School - Application for exceptional leave

Child's Name:

Class:

I wish to apply for my child to have **exceptional circumstances leave** from school during the following dates:

First date of absence:

Last day of absence::

Total number of missed days:

Please detail **exceptional circumstances**:

.....

.....

Signed: (Parent/Carer) Date:

School Use Only:

Current attendance %: Previous year attendance %:.....

Broken Weeks:

Attendance comments:

.....

.....

Additional information:

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Exceptional Circumstances: Authorised / Not Authorised

Signed: Headteacher Date:

Please note - during COVID attendance has been in line with DfE guidance.



Appendix B - Broken Weeks

To Parent / Carer of *(child's name)*

Dear Parent / Carer

Attendance for *(name and date of birth of child)*

I am writing to inform you that, according to our records, *(Child's name)* has *(number of)* broken weeks of attendance this year during the period *(date)*. A broken week is defined as being absent for one or more sessions in a week, Monday to Friday.

It may well be that this has been due to genuine illness or other reasons, and I would not wish to alarm you, but I thought it was important to bring this to your attention as research shows that this kind of attendance pattern can have serious implications for your child's progress and achievement over time. If you have sent in notes to school explaining the absences you do not need to do this again – this letter is purely for your information.

Although we would never wish you to send your child to school when they are obviously ill, we would like you to consider the impact that regular absences from school might have on their sense of achievement, inclusion and on their progress.

Under new Local Authority guidelines I would like to indicate that, should *(Child's name)* attendance not improve, for non-genuine medical reasons, then you are likely to be invited to a meeting with myself to discuss this and look at how we can improve *(child's name)* attendance.

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact me at school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Appendix C – Less than 90% attendance

To Parent/Carer of *(child's name)*

Dear Parent/Carer

Attendance for *(Child's Name)*

I am writing to inform you that, according to our records, *(child's name)* has below 90% attendance during the past year *(dates)*.

It may well be that this has been due to genuine illness or other reasons, and I would not wish to alarm you, but I thought it was important to bring this to your attention as research shows that this kind of attendance pattern can have serious implications for your child's progress and achievement over time. If you have sent in notes to school explaining the absences you do not need to do this again – this letter is purely for your information.

Although we would never wish you to send your child to school when they are obviously ill, we would like you to consider the impact that regular absences from school might have on their sense of achievement, inclusion and on their progress.

Under new Local Authority guidelines I would like to indicate that, should *(child's name)* attendance not improve, for non-genuine medical reasons, then you are likely to be invited to a meeting to discuss this and look at how we can improve *(child's name)* attendance.

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact me at school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Appendix D – number of lates

To Parent/Carer of (*child's name*)

Dear Parent/Carer

Attendance for (*name*)

I am writing to inform you that, according to our records, (*Child's name*) has had (*number of*) late arrivals this year during period (*date*). A late is defined as arriving after the register has been called at (*insert am and pm times*).

It may well be that this has been due to genuine reasons, and I would not wish to alarm you, but I thought it was important to bring this to your attention as research shows that this kind of attendance pattern can have serious implications for your child's progress and achievement over time. If you have sent in notes to school explaining the lates you do not need to do this again – this letter is purely for your information.

We would like you to consider the impact that regular lates from school might have on their sense of achievement, inclusion and on their progress.

Under new Local Authority guidelines I would like to indicate that, should (*Child's name*) attendance not improve, for non-genuine medical reasons, then you are likely to be invited to a meeting with myself to discuss this and look at how we can improve (*child's name*) attendance.

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact me at school.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher



Beacon Rise Primary School

Request for application for exceptional leave during term time

Child(ren)'s Name: **Class(es):**

Further to your request for your child(ren) to have **exceptional circumstances leave** from school during the following dates:

First date of absence: Last day of absence::

Your request has been: Authorised / Not Authorised

Additional comments:

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Signed: Headteacher Date: