

Attendance policy



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1. AIMS

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

- 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 & 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.

Every child should aim to achieve an overall attendance of 97%+ each academic year. Studies have shown that poor attendance is linked to poor attainment. At Beever Primary School, we want all our children to enjoy and achieve. It is a parents' legal responsibility to ensure the regular full-time attendance of their children.

3. ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 The governing board

The governing board 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

Mr. John Mellor is our lead governor for attendance. It is the responsibility of the lead governor to meet with Katie Greaves and Nicola Edwards, who are the designated senior leaders for attendance, to support, challenge monitor and evaluate the work of the school in relation to:

- Ensuring statutory duties in relation to pupil attendance are met.
- Reducing levels of absence and the impact on pupils' achievement.

3.2 The headteacher

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

3.3 The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

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 leaders responsible for attendance Miss Katie Greaves and Mrs Nicola Edwards. They can be contacted via the main school office on 0161 770 8351 or by email using info@beever.oldham.sch.uk

3.4 The attendance officer

The school 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 when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance officer is Tarik Ali and he can be contacted via 0161 770 6620/1

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. Class teachers are also responsible for identifying and recording absence patterns.

3.6 School office staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents to the Headteacher or School Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance
- Will send out initial text messages where a child is absent
- Will make phone calls to the parents where a child's absence has not been notified.
- Will report information to the School Leadership team regarding daily weekly and absence figures.

3.7 Parents/carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9.15am on the first day of the absence (preferably by text message to 07860 095209 or a telephone call to school), then each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- 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

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. RECORDING ATTENDANCE

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

School starts at 8.45am. Pupils arriving after 8.50am will have to come in to school via the main office and sign in on the Inentry system in the school foyer (pupils will receive a late mark 'L' code). Pupils arriving after 9.15am will receive an unauthorised late mark 'U' code, which will affect the whole of the morning session.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during 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.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9.15am by text message to 07860 095209 or a telephone call to school on 0161 770 8351 (see also section 7).

If we receive no contact from yourself, we will endeavour to contact you via the school texting system or telephone you directly. If we are unable to make contact with you by telephone, a home visit will be undertaken.

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

School and the School Health Advisor are able to offer advice and/or leaflets on exclusions due to illness e.g:

1. Chicken pox (child can return once the spots are healed over)
2. Diarrhoea and Vomiting (24/48 hours after last episode)
3. Coughs and colds (no absence required)
4. Head lice (no exclusion, treatment should be completed without absence)

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.

If your child is absent for two or more days, or there are attendance concerns, you may be required to provide school with proof of illness; this can be in the form of a doctor's letter, copy of prescription and or medication, which clearly show the dates corresponding with the absence. Advice from 111 can also be sought and the text message provided by this service can be used as evidence.

Where a child's attendance has dropped below 90%, all absences will be unauthorised without proof of illness. Parents should also note that where their child's attendance falls below 90%, they are categorised as 'Persistent Absentees', and therefore the attendance service will be monitoring their attendance closely

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, 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 and parents/carers should provide school with a medical card or letter. Parents/carers should be aware that we are not able to authorise siblings taken out of school when they do not have an appointment: these absences will be unauthorised.

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

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (8.50-9.15am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L)
- After the register has closed (after 9.15am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U)

Miss Greaves and Mrs Edwards monitor punctuality each week. Where there are concerns, parents/carers are contacted and possible strategies for support are discussed.

If your child is 20 minutes late a day they lose:				
1 hour 40 minutes a week	6 hrs 40 minutes a month. This is equivalent to over 1 full day.	10 hours a half term. This is equivalent to over 2 full days.	20 hours a half term. This is equivalent to 4 full days.	65 hours a school year This is equivalent to over 13 full days

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 will carry out a home visit. If we have undertaken several attempts, including unsuccessful home visits, this may in some cases result in a referral to Children's Social Care or the Police.
- 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 involving an education welfare officer.

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

Parents/carers will receive a copy of their child's attendance report at the Autumn and Spring term parents' evening and in the Summer term together with their child's end-of-year report.

Miss Greaves and Mrs Edwards are responsible for monitoring attendance each week and will discuss/meet parents/carers where attendance is of a concern.

The headteacher will share attendance data and key messages in the school newsletters.

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.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as one off events which are unavoidable, examples may include the death of a close relative, attendance at a funeral, respite care of a looked after child, or a housing crisis which prevents attendance.

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 two weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the online form on the school website, (under the attendance tab). 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

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.

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.

Fast Track to Attendance is a time focused approach to improve attendance. The aim of Fast Track is to promote early intervention by school and where necessary by the Local authority. The aim is to ensure that rapid and appropriate action is taken to tackle absence problems as soon as they become apparent. Failure to make and sustain changes will result in the Local Authority prosecuting through the courts.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

When a child attends school on a regular basis, they take an important step towards reaching their full potential, and are given the greatest opportunity to learn new things and develop their skills. Children who miss school frequently can fall behind with their work. Furthermore, the more time a child spends around other children, whether in the classroom or as part of a school team or club, the more chance they have of making friends and feeling included, boosting social skills, confidence and self-esteem.

At Beever Primary School, we recognise and celebrate good attendance weekly in our whole school assemblies where trophies are presented to the classes who have achieved the highest attendance and best punctuality that week. Each term, certificates are awarded to those pupils who have achieved the attendance target and to those who have made significant improvements.

Miss Greaves and Mrs Edwards also make phone calls to families where improvements have been made in order to celebrate successes with parents/carers.

7. Attendance monitoring

Miss Greaves and Mrs Edwards monitor pupil absences on a weekly basis and liaise closely with the local authority attendance officer, Tarik Ali.

Parents/carers are expected to message or call the school before 9.15am if their child is going to be absent due to ill-health.

If a pupil's absence goes above 2 days, we will contact parents/carers to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents/carers a pupil's absence continues to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classed as a persistent absentee.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, 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 other 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
- 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
- Notify parents/carers of their concerns in writing.
- Work in partnership with families to offer support and identify actions/strategies to improve attendance

8. Monitoring arrangements

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

9. CHILDREN MISSING EDUCATION

At Beever Primary we believe all students, regardless of their circumstances or background are entitled to a full time education which is suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs.

Pupil absence will be followed up on a daily basis as a matter of priority. Every child who has a continuous period of absence of three days or more will be required to provide proof of absence; home visits will also be undertaken.

School will follow the Education Attendance Service process when a child has been absent for three or more days without reason, contact will initially be via telephone, followed by a home visit and a letter. If after 10 school days no contact has been made, school will complete the Child Missing Education (CME) form and forward the school's investigation to the Local Authority, who will then follow their procedures. After a period of 20 days and on completion of all safeguarding checks, a child will be removed from school roll.

School follow Department for Education Statutory guidance, which can be found on the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/children-missing-education>

10. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to;

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Educational Neglect 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