



Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School

# **Attendance Policy**

Date of Policy: September 2022

Review Due: September 2024



# **Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School**

## **Attendance Policy – Pupils**

Governors' Committee Responsible: Full Governing Board

Policy Originator: Mrs C Rose

Next review Date: Autumn 2024

### **Aims**

Our attendance policy aims to:

- Support pupils and their parents/carers in the establishment of the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality;
- Ensure that all pupils have full and equal access to the best education that we offer in order to increase learning;
- Enable pupils to progress smoothly, confidently and with continuity through the school;
- Make parents/carers aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure attendance meets Government and Local Authority targets.

This policy has been devised in consultation with Staff, Governors, Children and Parents.

### **Being at school**

School education lays the foundations of a child's life. Research clearly demonstrates the link between regular attendance and educational progress and attainment. Parents/carers and the school staff work in partnership in making educational success and ensuring that all children have full and equal access to all that the school has to offer. As a school, we will encourage parents and carers to ensure that their child achieves maximum possible attendance and that any problems that prevent this are identified and acted on promptly. As parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that their children arrive at school and return home safely.

### **Expectations**

#### **We expect that all pupils will:**

- Attend school every day;
- Attend school punctually;
- Attend appropriately prepared for the day;
- Discuss promptly with their class teacher or school office any problems that may affect their attendance

#### **We expect all parents/carers will:**

- Ensure regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities;
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually and prepared for the school day;
- Ensure that they contact the school daily of absence or if known in advance, whenever their child is unable to attend school.

Examples	Authorised absences	Unauthorised absences
	*genuine illness of the pupil: *hospital/dental/doctor's appointments for the pupil *major religious observances; *visits to prospective new schools; *external exams or educational assessments.	*shopping/day trip/visit to a theme park: *a birthday treat; *oversleeping due to late night; *looking after other children/other family member; *appointments for other family members.

- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep their child away from school.
- Notify the school of any home circumstances that might affect the behaviour and learning of their child.
- Notify school immediately of any changes to contact details.

**We expect that the school will:**

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere;
- Provide a safe environment;
- Provide a sympathetic ear to any child's or parent's concerns;
- Keep regular and accurate records of am and pm attendance and punctuality, monitor individual child's attendance and punctuality;
- Contact parents when a child fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence;
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain explanations from parents. Although parents may offer a reason, only the headteacher can authorise the absence. In the case of appointments or frequent absence due to medical conditions, verifications from a GP or other relevant body may be requested;
- Encourage good attendance and punctuality through a system of reward and recognition;
- Regularly inform parents of the % attendance of all pupils;
- Make initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly;
- Meet regularly with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor and support school attendance and punctuality;
- Refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to Education Welfare. Failure by the family to comply with the planned support set by the Education Welfare may result in further actions, e.g. a penalty notice, parental prosecution or an application for an Education Supervision Order;
- Will notify the Local Authority (LA) after 15 days sickness;
- Will notify EWO after 10 days unexplained absence

**Registers, Punctuality and Lateness**

Punctuality is crucial. Lateness into school causes disruption to that individual's learning and to that of the other pupils in the class. It is paramount therefore that all pupils arrive at school on time. For school pupils in KS1 (Year 1 and 2) the doors in the main playground are opened from 8.45am and for Reception pupils the side door to the classrooms is also opened at 8.45am.

- By law, schools must take a morning and afternoon register and record the attendance or absence of every pupil;
- Registration takes place at 9am and pupils who arrive after 9.05am will be recorded as late to school.

- Registers close at 9.30am and after this lateness is recorded as an unauthorised absence and can be subject to prosecution by the local authority.
- Afternoon registration is taken at 1.00pm.
- Persistent lateness will be dealt with through the home/school link worker and may be referred to Education Welfare.
- Pupil's attendance and punctuality is recorded on their report and will be passed to future schools as necessary.

### **Pupil Leaving During the School Day**

During school hours staff have a 'Duty of Care' and therefore must know where the pupils are during the school day.

- Pupils are not allowed to leave the premises without prior permission from the school.
- Whenever possible, parents should try and arrange medical and other appointments outside of school time.
- Parents are requested to confirm in writing, by letter or email, the reason for any planned absence, the time of leaving, the expected return time.
- Pupils must be signed out on leaving the school and be signed back on their return.
- Where a pupil is being collected from the school, parents are to report to the school office before the pupil is allowed to leave the site.
- If a pupil leaves the school site without permission their parents will be contacted. *Should the school be unable to make contact with the family it may be appropriate, in certain circumstances, to contact Police and register the pupil as a missing person.*

### **Leave of absence**

The school holiday dates and end of Key Stage Assessment dates are published a year in advance and leave of absence **will not** be authorised during these assessment periods. INSET days are published as soon as the school have agreed these, but may be subject to change.

The Education (Pupil Registration)(England)(Amendment) Regulations 2013 explanatory note states: *Regulation 7 of 2006 Regulations is amended to prohibit the proprietor of a maintained school granting leave of absence to a pupil; except where an application has been made in advance and the proprietor considers that there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Leave of absence taken without authorisation may be referred to the Education Welfare Service. This may result in prosecution proceedings, or a Fixed Term Penalty Notice. If a Fixed Term Penalty Notice is issued, a separate Notice would be issued to each parent for each child.*

Holidays during term time will NOT be authorised. The Headteacher and Governors have determined that:

- In **exceptional circumstances** permission may be granted for a maximum of five days leave of absence providing your child has a good (95% or higher) attendance record over the previous 12 weeks.
- Where leave of absence in term time is due to exceptional circumstances, an application form must be requested from the school office and submitted for consideration by the Headteacher on behalf of the school governors, no less than 4 weeks prior to the requested date. Consideration will then be given to the pupil's previous school attendance and that the time requested does not exceed five school days in any one academic year.
- There are 190 school days (380 sessions) a year which your child is expected to attend. There are also approximately 71 days (142 sessions) of school holidays. This is approximately 13 school weeks. Please ensure your holidays are taken during this period.

- If leave is taken without prior authorisation by the school, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence and Education Welfare will be notified.

## **Penalty Notices**

Penalty Notices can be issued for unauthorised leave or if a parent/carer fails to ensure regular school attendance. See information leaflet on the school website.

## **Penalty Notices for Absences During Term Time**

In accordance with guidance from West Berkshire County Council, leave of absence during SATS, Phonic Assessment week and other external exam periods will not be authorised by the school and a Penalty Notice may be issued. If the penalty notice is not paid each parent may be liable to prosecution at the Magistrates Court, and if proved, each notice may receive a criminal conviction and/or fine to the maximum of £1,000 plus costs.

In line with the amendments made to The Educational (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007 please note the following:

- The Headteacher can now request that the local authority issue a Penalty Notice to parents, when pupils are taken out of school for 5 or more day's holiday or leave of absence without school authorisation.
- The amount payable on issue of a Penalty Notice is £60 if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 when paid within 28 days.
- If the Penalty Notice is not paid within 28 days the local authority is then obliged to prosecute for failing to ensure regular school attendance.
- Penalty Notices are issued to **each** parent of each child.

## **Failure to ensure regular school attendance**

Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School hold regular attendance meetings with the EWO. Any parents whose children are identified as a cause for concern will be invited to attend. If there is no improvement in school attendance, the school will refer to the EWO who work in partnership with schools and parents in support of pupils who are failing to attend school on a regular basis.

Education Welfare may also issue a Penalty Notice to parent/carers who are failing to secure their Child's regular school attendance and are not engaging with supportive measure to improve attendance proposed by the school or Education Welfare Officers. Before a Penalty notice is issued, parents will be warned of their liability to receive such a notice.

## **Changing Schools**

It is important that if families decide to send their child to a different school that they inform Mrs Bland's Infant and Nursery School as soon as possible.

AS pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving the school and starting the next
- The address of the new school.
- A new home address if appropriate.

The pupil's school records will then be sent to the new school. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the local authority Tracking Office and Education Welfare.