



# Attendance Policy

## 1 Introduction

1.1 At Barnard Grove Primary School, we believe that good attendance is central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential. Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

1.2 We aim to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence (PA);
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education;
- Act early to address patterns of absence (often working with the School Attendance Officer);
- Ensure all pupils are punctual to their lessons.

1.3 There are a number of legal powers and duties that govern school attendance. These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434(1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

## 2 Attendance Registers

2.1 The law requires that all schools have an admission register, containing the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission and information regarding parents/carers.

2.2 Every entry on the admission register and attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years.

2.3 The local authority (LA) will be informed of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they:

- have been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system e.g. home education;
- have ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered;
- have a medical condition certified by the school nurse that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school;
- have been permanently excluded.



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### 3 Contents of Attendance Register

- 3.1 An attendance register is taken at the start of the school day and the start of the afternoon session. Pupils are recorded as being present; attending an approved educational activity; absent; or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.
- 3.2 At Barnard Grove Primary School an electronic registration system is used (SIMS) in each class.
- 3.3 Pupils are marked as being present using the following code: / **(am)** and \ **(pm)**. Should a pupil arrive late, but before the register closes, the following code is used: **L**.
- 3.4 It is important that pupils arrive in school on time, ready to start the school day, minimising disruption in class, when lessons have started, and also alleviating stress/embarrassment to the pupil.
- 3.5 Pupils enter the school building between 8:40am and 8:50am. Pupils who arrive after this time should report to the School Office, where their presence in school will be recorded.
- 3.6 For the morning session, the register opens at 8:50am and is kept open until 9:30am. For the afternoon session, in Early Years and Key Stage 1, the register opens at 12:20pm and is kept open until 12:30pm. For the afternoon session, in Key Stage 2, the register opens at 1:10pm and is kept open until 1:20pm. A pupil arriving in school after the close of registration is marked with the relevant absence code.
- 3.7 The following attendance codes are used within school:
- **Code B: Off-site educational activity** - when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils.
  - **Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment** - this code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered.
  - **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity** - this code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.



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- **Code V: Educational visit or trip** - this code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

3.8 When a pupil is absent from school, the absence is recorded as authorised or unauthorised. An absence is only authorised if the school gives approval in advance or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards for absence. The following absence codes are used within school:

- **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school** - only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Each request is considered individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent gave advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed schooling.
- **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made** - if no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E.
- **Code H: Holiday authorised by the school** - Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless in exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances, which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Headteacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion. Refer to the following appendices:

1. Appendix 1: Holiday Request Form
2. Appendix 2: School Holiday Authorisation Calculation Chart
3. Appendix 3: School Reply Letter(s) to Parents/Carers

- **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)** – we request that parents notify us on the first day the pupil is unable to attend due to illness. In some circumstances, where a pupil has been referred to the LA due to poor attendance, parents/carers may be required to provide medical evidence to support the absence.
- **Code M: Medical or dental appointments** - missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. However, we encourage parents/carers to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.



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- **Code R: Religious observance** - schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents/carers belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.
- **Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence** - a number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

3.9 An absence is classed as unauthorised if the school is not satisfied with the reasons given for absence. The following absence codes are used:

- **Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the Headteacher** - If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents/carers still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval.
- **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided** - school will follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences, on the first day, with a telephone call or text message. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register will be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely.
- **Code O: Absent from school without authorisation** - if the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.
- **Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed**



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### 4 Leave of Absence for Child Performers

4.1 The amendments made to regulation 7 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 on leave of absence do not affect the section that allows the parent of a child performer to seek leave of absence from school for their child to take part in a performance.

4.2 Section 2 of Regulation 7 (which has not been amended) still enables the Headteacher to grant leave of absence for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance within the meaning of section 37 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963.

4.3 Legislation sets out that a LA licence must be obtained before a child can take part in a performance. Where the license specifies the dates that a child is to be away from school to perform, then the Headteacher should authorise those days. However, where the terms of the license do not specify dates it is at the discretion of the Headteacher to authorise leave of absence.

### 5 The Role of the LA

5.1 At the beginning of each academic year an agreed Service Level Agreement (SLA) is signed by both school and the LA.

5.2 Register checks are conducted, alongside the school's Social Inclusion Manager, Hilary Timothy, each half-term. At this meeting, every pupils' attendance (and punctuality) is monitored, with a focus on those pupils whose attendance is less than 90%.

5.3 If a pupils' attendance is less than 90%, and there is no extenuating circumstance, then we will work with the LA to apply the LA's Fast Tracking Policy (Appendix 4).

5.4 Should a pupil be regularly late for school, then a letter is sent home to parents/carers informing of the school's concern and of the need to improve their child's punctuality.



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### 6 Rewards

6.1 At the end of each academic year, pupils with 100% receive a certificate from the LA, as well as a school reward.

Review Date: September 2019 (Policy reviewed annually)