



Name of Policy: Registration & Attendance Policy
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Relevant Committee: P&P
Member of Staff or Governor responsible
where applicable: Head teacher
Date of Governing Body approval:
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Signature: _____ **Headteacher** **Date:** _____

Signature: _____ **Chair of Governors** **Date:** _____

REGISTRATION & ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. MISSION STATEMENT:

Bassingham School is committed to providing a full and efficient education for all pupils. The school believes sincerely that all pupils benefit from the education it provides and therefore from regular school attendance. To this end the School will do as much as it can to ensure that all pupils achieve maximum possible attendance and that any problems, which may impede full attendance, are acted upon as quickly as possible.

2. AIMS:

It is recognised that

- All pupils of statutory school age have an equal right to access an education in accordance with the National Curriculum regulations.
- No pupils should be deprived of their opportunities by either their own non-attendance or that of other pupils from receiving an education that meets their needs and personal development.
- In the first instance, it is the responsibility of pupils and their parents to ensure attendance at school as required by law.
- Many pupils and their parents may need to be supported and rewarded at some stage in meeting their attendance obligations and responsibilities.
- Situations may exist beyond the control of pupils and/or parents, which schools need to address in partnership with external agencies.
- The vast majority of pupils want to attend school to learn, to socialise with their peer groups and prepare themselves fully to take their place in society as well-rounded and responsible citizens with the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to contribute to the life and culture of their communities.

3. EXPECTATIONS:

We expect the following from our pupils:



- That they attend school regularly.
- That they will arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.

We expect the following from parents:

- To encourage their children to attend school.
- To ensure that they contact the school as soon as is reasonably practical whenever their child is unable to attend.
- To ensure that their children arrive in school well prepared for the school day and to check that they have done any homework set.
- To contact the school in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may keep them away from school.
- To avoid holidays in term time whenever possible.
- You should apply to the Head teacher when holidays are to be taken in term time.

Parents and pupils can expect the following from school:

- Information regarding procedures for notification of absence to be issued to parents periodically.
- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Individual attendance reports to be issued on the school report in July.
- Early contact with parents when a pupil is absent and no message is received.
- Immediate and confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose the information to anybody without the consent of the student or their parent).
- We will take steps through rewards to encourage good attendance.
- A quality education.

Registration will be undertaken by the class teacher twice daily. This will be done for morning sessions between 9.00 and 9.15 am and for afternoon sessions between 1.00 and 1.15 pm. Where a child arrives at school more than 15 minutes after the end of the registration periods, they will be counted as being late.

In manual registration full details of symbols used and supplementary reference letters may be found on the front page of the registers. Staff will ensure that "End of Term" summary boxes are accurately completed on the last day of each term. In computer attendance packages (eg Key Solutions) the instructions should be followed closely.

The registers will be returned to the office and only removed in the event of:

- a) Checking purposes in the event of a fire alarm being sounded.
- b) Collection by the Head teacher for administrative purposes.

In the event of a school trip taking place, class lists must be taken on the visit, which clearly indicate the presence or absence of a child.

Dinner registers will also be completed at each morning session. The total number staying will be collected and noted down in a master register and passed to the Secretary.

4. ENCOURAGING ATTENDANCE THROUGH REWARDS:



Attendance can be encouraged in the following ways:

- Accurate completion of the registers at the beginning of each session.
- Attendance checks at appropriate time.
- Recording of good attendance on reports to parents.
- A Gold Award, using the Lincolnshire County Council's Certificate for 100% attendance achieved throughout the year.
- All awards to be awarded by the Head teacher and/or Governors as appropriate.
- Targeting and visiting pupils who have attendance problems as part of liaison between KS2 and KS3 and good secondary transfer practise.

5. RESPONDING TO NON-ATTENDANCE:

When a pupil does not attend, the school needs to respond effectively.

- If a note or telephone call is not received from parents, the parents will be contacted on the first day of absence by telephone, or, if not on the telephone then by letter. (This action will depend on the individual pupil concerned).
- Where there is no response, a second letter will be sent after three days of unexplained non-attendance, or there may be a visit from a member of the school staff and or the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) if this is considered appropriate.
- The Head teacher is to be informed of any absence which:
 - a) appears irregular (below 90%).
 - b) shows regular patterns eg. repeated absence on the same day/s of each week.
 - c) is unexplained ie unauthorised.

The Head teacher will meet with the Education Welfare Officer on a regular basis and raise any issues causing concern. Staff will have advance notice of any such meetings and should alert the Headteacher to any issues which may be concerning them. Arrangements can then be made to supply class cover and thus allow that member of staff to talk to the EWO.

Following referral of any matter to the EWS the school will take part fully in monitoring the situation and work fully with relevant parties and agencies in the interest of the individual child. Such monitoring and co-operation may well concern matters other than those directly relating to attendance issues.

Reintegration

- The return to school for a pupil after long-term absence requires special planning. For example, it may be appropriate to establish a Pastoral Support Programme as detailed in the DfEE Social Inclusion: Pupil Support Guidance.
- The appropriate staff will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- All staff need to be aware that this is a difficult process that will require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible
- Programmes may need to be tailored to individual needs and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in lessons as appropriate. Support from the SEN Co-ordinator may be required.



The success of the Pastoral Support Programme will require the involvement of appropriate school staff, other agencies, the child and the parents. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

Staff will be notified of the return of the long-term absentees by the Head teacher or via staff meetings.

Penalty Notice

Penalty notices for absence from school can be issued by the Local Authority on requests from schools and the police.

The following circumstances are considered as appropriate reasons for the issuing of Penalty Notices:

- Truancy,
- Parentally-condoned absences
- Excessive holidays in term time
- Excessive delayed return from extended holidays
- Persistent lateness after the register has closed

A pupil has to be absent from school in one of these circumstances for at least 10 sessions in any term before the issuing of a Penalty Notice can be considered.

Following a request by the school for the issuing of a Penalty Notice a check is made by the Local Authority that the request meets the conditions of the Code of Conduct. A warning letter will then be sent to parents explaining that unless their child attends full time for the next 15 days a Penalty Notice will be issued.

Where a Penalty Notice is issued, each parent is required to pay a fine to the Local Authority.

Parenting Contracts

A parenting contract is a formal agreement between the parent and either the Local Authority or the governing body of the school.

The parent agrees to comply with specified requirements and the governing body agrees to provide specific support to enable the parent to comply. Both are tailored to the situation.

The parenting contract is appropriate:

- in cases of irregular school attendance.
- where a pupil has consistently misbehaved.
- where a pupil is excluded from school.
- where the Local Authority or governing body feel that parenting is a factor in the child's non-attendance or behaviour.

The advantage of a parenting contract is that it allows schools and local authority to address behaviour and non-attendance problems at an early stage and to offer support to the parent while doing so.

6. SCHOOL ORGANISATION

In order for any policy to be successful, every member of the staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils by their behaviour, the importance of the education



being provided. This means ensuring that all staff arrive to lessons on time and well prepared.

In addition to these there may be specific responsibilities allocated to individual staff groups such as the following:

Head teacher

- To oversee the whole policy.
- To report to governors.

Class Teacher

- To complete registers accurately and on time.
- To inform the secretary/headteacher of any unexplained non-attendance.
- To record all reasons for absence in the register.
- To ensure that children going home for lunch are marked in the dinner register and that a letter authorising this has been received from parents/guardians.
- To maintain their own signing in/out system for children who come and go during the day eg. doctor's appointment, sudden illness.
- To inform the Headteacher of concerns, eg persistent lateness, patterns of absence.

Governors

- Governor(s) may be given specific role/interest in monitoring attendance and/or policies.
- Make an annual report in the Parent/Governor Report sent out annually.

Parents

- Contact the school on first day of absence or as soon as possible.
- Absence notes if the absence is longer than initially indicated.
- Support for general attendance.

School Secretary

- Parent's letters to be put in registers.
- Telephone absence slips to be put in registers.
- Awareness that the completion of DfES and county returns eg. Plasc Return are greatly simplified by full and accurate register summaries.
- Maintain a signing in/out book for children who come and go during the day eg. doctor/dental appointments, sudden illnesses. Parents to come to the office to collect their children.
- Inform Headteacher of any pupil leaving the school/removal from roll.

7. LIAISING WITH VARIOUS AGENCIES WHEREVER APPROPRIATE

Good relations and working practices are essential. Agencies have difficult roles in that they endeavour to support both the school in meeting its legal obligations as well as the home and pupil in ensuring that the latter's educational opportunities are maximised. Some parents need the support of these agencies so that they can fulfil their legal obligations to their children.

Educational Welfare Service



- (a) The Education Welfare Service has been described as the “attendance enforcement arm” of most local authorities (DES 1991) which complements the role of the school.
- (b) The Lincolnshire Education Welfare Service will always endeavour to provide schools in Lincolnshire with a service that recognises the uniqueness of the school and the community it serves.
- (c) The Education Welfare Officers will continue to work closely with teachers, pupils and their families, whilst the priority will relate to attendance matters, other activities may include behaviour problems, exclusions, special educational needs, child protection, child employment and children in entertainment and any other problems that prevent a young person benefiting fully from the educational opportunities available to them.
- (d) The Education Welfare Service would wish to support the school in the following ways:
 - Accepting referrals.
 - Home visiting to make an assessment of the problems.
 - Where necessary, instigating legal proceedings on behalf of the LEAD in the Magistrates’ Court or the Family Court.
 - Offering professional advice, guidance and support about pupil welfare issues.
 - Working in partnership with schools to develop sensitive individual re-integration packages for long-term absentees.
 - Group work with pupils or parents.
 - Work on specific attendance projects.
 - Strategic support to schools, including advice on the collection and analysis of attendance data, audits of in-school procedures and subsequent action planning, together with targeted strategies to address specific issues.
 - Guidance concerning young people involved in entertainment/performing.

Other agencies are to be used where appropriate in individual cases.

Research has shown that schools in partnership with the following support services have a greater impact on school attendance than when they act alone or when the support services are uncoordinated or disjointed.

- Educational Behavioural and Support Services.
- Educational Psychologists.
- Special Educational Needs Service.
- Social Services.

Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act places obligations on all agencies that process, store and share information on any individual. It is important to have full regard for the requirements of the Act. Each school has a Data Protection Notification which details the circumstances under which data is managed.

8. REVIEW

The Head teacher and staff will review this policy on a 3 year cycle and present any suggested amendments or updates required to the Pupil and Personnel Committee.



APPENDIX 1

GUIDANCE FOR CLASS TEACHERS

SUGGESTED METHODOLOGY

Under Section 7 of the Education Act 1996, it is the legal responsibility of parents to see that their child/children receive(s) regular education suitable to their age, aptitude and abilities.

The Importance of Registration

- An attendance register, electronic or manual, must be kept on which, at the BEGINNING of each morning and afternoon session, pupils are marked present or absent. Registers should be retained by the class teacher.
- Manuscript registers must be kept in ink and corrections must be made in such a way that the original entry and the correction are both clearly distinguishable.
- Authorised absences should be entered in red initially with the symbol for categorising the absence in blue or black.
- Accurate marking of registers, and appropriate maintenance of electronic and computerised systems can have a significant impact on overall school attendance and absence figures.

Categorising Absence

- **Only the school**, in the context of the law **can approve absence**, not parents. If a class teacher does not accept the explanation offered for absence as a valid reason then the matter must be referred to the Head teacher.
- Emerging patterns of authorised absence should be reported to the Head teacher.
- Class Teachers who experience difficulty in receiving a parental note should inform the Head teacher.

Authorised or Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be away or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory reason for absence.

All other absence must be regarded as **unauthorised**.

The following may be reasons for authorising absences.

- Illness
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments where proof is available.
- Days of religious observance.
- Fixed term exclusion.
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated.



Family Holidays:

Parents should not normally take pupils on holiday during the school term though Head teachers are able to exercise their discretion when granting parental requests. However, each request should be considered individually taking into account the age of the child, previous attendance patterns, parental views and the educational progress of the child. If a request is not granted and the parent takes the child on holiday, the absence should not be authorised.

NB: PUPILS WHO ARE ABSENT FROM SCHOOL BUT TAKING PART IN AN APPROVED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY SHOULD BE MARKED IN THE USUAL WAY BUT ARE COUNTED AS PRESENT FOR CALCULATING PERFORMANCE TABLE DATA. TO AVOID CONFUSION IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS PUPILS WHO ARE OFF SITE SHOULD NOT BE MARKED AS PRESENT. THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES FALL WITHIN THIS CATEGORY.

- Field trips and educational visits both in this country and overseas.
- Pupils receiving approved education off site, eg. those receiving specialist support or those in receipt of home tuition on the roll of the school.

Absences should not be authorised under the following circumstances.

- Shopping trips.
- Minding the house or looking after siblings.
- Lateness if registration is missed without explanation.
- Medical appointments that cannot be verified.
- No reason given.
- School staff feel the note is not genuine or not valid.

Unusual circumstances may arise that lead to a young person being absent from school. It is for the Head teacher to decide whether the explanation offered is reasonable. In such situations, the individual circumstances, previous attendance pattern and frequency of such incidents should be considered. Further advice is available in DfEE Circular No. 10/99.

Lateness:

Schools should actively discourage late arrival by challenging young people who are persistently late or arrive late without reasonable explanation.

Schools should have a policy on how long registers remain open, 15 minutes from the beginning of registration would be reasonable. In the event of bad weather this period can be extended.



Where a pupil arrives during the period when the register is open they may be marked present.

Where a pupil arrives after register closure without good reason, they should be marked with an unauthorised absence in red and the letter L in blue or black to indicate that they are on site.

Removal from the school roll

There are strict guidelines on the circumstances under which a pupil may be removed from the school roll. These are detailed in Circulars 10/99 and 11/99 and the Schools Administration Handbook (section A2). Removal from the school roll under any other circumstances is illegal.

The names of pupils may only be deleted from the Admission Register:-

- where a school has been notified that the pupil has been registered as a pupil at another school.
- where a pupil has ceased to attend the school and the parent(s) have satisfied the County Council that the pupil is receiving education otherwise than by attendance at school.
- where the school has been notified by the School Medical Officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school before becoming legally exempt from the obligation to attend.
- where the pupil has been absent from school without reasonable cause for four academic weeks and the Head teacher of the school has failed after reasonable enquiry and consultation with the Education Welfare Service and the LEA, to locate the pupil.
- where the Head teacher has been notified that the pupil has died.
- if a pupil has not returned to school within ten school days of the agreed return date after a family holiday in term time.
- where the pupil will cease to be of compulsory school age before the school next meets and has notified an intention to discontinue in attendance.
- where the pupil has been permanently excluded and this decision has been confirmed by the Pupil Discipline Committee.

Ensuring Pupil Information is up to date

Schools should ensure, as far as possible, that the information they hold on pupils and parents is accurate and up to date. This will help to ensure that contact with families is effective and that referrals to other agencies can be actioned effectively. Principle 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998 states 'Personal Data shall be accurate, and where necessary, kept up to date'.



APPENDIX 1

GOOD PRACTICE:

Research suggests that good practice is associated with:

1. A designated teacher being charged with specific responsibility for pupil attendance.
2. A list of absentees being produced quickly, ideally by morning break, for use by appropriate teaching and office staff.
3. The school devising a sensitive scheme for the immediate follow-up of absentees – eg. either by telephoning home or sending out letters to parents or guardians.
4. Class teachers ensuring that records of attendance are as accurate as possible.
5. Head teacher monitoring the attendance records of classes.
6. Head teachers having regular meetings with EWO.
7. Absentees and truants being quietly welcomed back to school upon their return and efforts made to reintegrate them socially and academically.
8. First day of absence contact. Where the school is able to resource this, a phone call to the homes of all, or a targeted group of absentees on their first day of absence has proved to be effective in addressing casual and opportunistic absence. Even short-term use of the strategy can produce long-term benefits.
9. The Data Protection Act requires that personal information and records are up to date and accurate. This is especially important when referrals are made to another agency.