

Birkwood Primary School

Attendance Policy 2024



Model School Attendance Policy

Birkwood Primary seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach his or her full potential. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups. Therefore, those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and a more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training.

Birkwood Primary aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies to strive towards every child reaching (insert own attendance target) to ensure that each child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies, we can ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance, for all children at Birkwood Primary.

School Staff to Support Attendance

The strategic leader for attendance is Mrs. R Rennison.

The attendance officer is Mrs. Alison Booth

Please contact the attendance officer on a day-to-day basis when your child is absent or for any queries regarding attendance.

The parent support advisor/safeguarding & pastoral lead is Mrs. Linda Taylor.

To manage and promote regular attendance Birkwood Primary will:

Keep parents updated on the overall attendance and individual pupil's attendance via letters home, newsletters, social media and school website & newsletter.

Follow the DfE and Government guidance in relation to school attendance and COVID-19.

Follow Public Health guidance should any local lockdowns or outbreaks in school occur.

Report to parents how their child is achieving in school and how their child's attendance is impacting on this via regular parent evenings.

Build positive relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. The link between attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing will be discussed with parents.

Utilise attendance data, analysing patterns and trends to target attendance and punctuality improvement across pupil cohorts or individual pupils, to reduce persistent or severe absence from school.

Review the attendance policy annually and publish on the school website

Account for and consider the specific needs of pupils and their families where there may be other barriers to attendance (medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities) and provide support to overcome these barriers. (e.g. Early Help or other wider partners)

Support pupils back into school following a length or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.

Monitor individual students' attendance to:

- a) Celebrate good and improved school attendance and reward this through competitions, certificates, and events.
- b) Notify parents when we are worried about their child's attendance by following the procedure below.

Attendance Framework

First Day Response procedure when a child is absent

- Absence text
- No response – phone call – no response – home visit

Monitoring Structure of absences

- Attendance falls below 96% - Below school target letter sent
- Attendance 94% - Parent/Carer invited to School Attendance Panel with Attendance Officer and EWO present
- Attendance 92% - Contact from school to warn of no further absences to be authorised without medical evidence
- Attendance 90% - Referral to the Education Welfare Service – if further absences remain unauthorised
- Attendance below 90% appointment made for Attendance Panel at the Town Hall
- Attendance continues to fall despite Meetings/Home Visits/Referral/Warnings of Court – Application made to Court

To manage and promote the regular attendance of their children, parents will:

Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.

Understand their responsibility to keep the School up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2022.

Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.

Establish effective communication with the School and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school so that we can work together to resolve this.

Contact School on the first day of absence to inform school of the reason and when the child is expected to return. Keep school informed if the absence is likely to continue so that school and partner agencies can ensure that amendments or alternatives can be made to provision if required.

Provide the School with any medical appointment cards and where possible make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, parents should ensure that children attend prior to or following their appointment.

Attend any meetings called by School and partner agencies to discuss attendance.

In order to support schools and academies in managing and promoting regular school attendance, the Education Welfare Service will;

Identify a key strategic lead to work collaboratively with School, to: Support in fulfilling their responsibilities in relation to improving attendance.

Attend meetings with the School to identify children with irregular school attendance and develop strategies to ensure that all children can attend school regularly.

Support the school in promoting attendance by providing advice, guidance and creation of action plans in relation to working together to improve attendance.

Review referrals from school to address matters of poor school attendance when Early help and intervention has failed to improve attendance by:

- a) Visiting parents' homes to undertake an assessment of need and to challenge and resolve matters of poor school attendance.
- b) Involve other agencies where appropriate, such as Public Health (school nurses) or Early Help.

In situations where all other strategies have failed to improve school attendance, the Education Welfare Service will enforce Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and the Children Act 1989, which may result in a fine up to £2,500; a Parenting Order; a community order; or a custodial sentence. Consideration will also be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice in case of unauthorised absence where appropriate (see code of conduct) and/or a Parenting Contract or Education Supervision Order

Registration

School day start time 8:45am

School day end time 3:15pm

Morning registers should all be completed by 8:55am

Afternoon registers should be completed by Ten minutes after the children finish Lunch Play

Any pupils arriving after these times should report to reception so that they can be given a late mark; pupils arriving after 9am should be accompanied by a parent so that a reason for lateness can be given; the number of minutes late is recorded in order to measure the impact of lost education due to late arrival.

Absences

Parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absences. However, it is school that makes the decision whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence. School will make this decision based on the information available to them. Parents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible and information such as appointment cards, medication or application for leave of absence will assist school in making this decision.

Re-occurring unauthorised absence should be referred to the Education Welfare Service and this can lead to legal interventions and a formal assessment.

Request for leave of absence in term time

Birkwood has adopted the Local Authority code of conduct (January 2024) in respect of leave of absence in term time. All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form. If parents proceed with the leave of absence in term time, Birkwood may refer to the Local Authority for a penalty notice. Penalty notices may be issued due to the deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission (where it can be demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorized absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.

Absence for participation in a performance

In these instances, Birkwood will follow Local Authority's guidance and by-laws, working in partnership with Education Welfare Service to ensure that any performance absence is within the parameters of the law.

Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The Attendance Policy has a direct link to safeguarding policy; the behaviour policy; anti-bullying strategies and the Health and Safety Policy.

The School has also adopted the Local Authority Policies on Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education. Birkwood also follows Local Authority guidance in relation to coding absence for families who travel as part of their culture.

All these policies have been endorsed by our governing body, which support the School in all attempts to improve the attendance and safeguarding agenda.

Development and implementation of this policy will be considered under School obligations from the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Additional information can be found at www.barnsley.gov.uk/education-welfare-service

If you wish to discuss the information outlined in this booklet, please contact any of the following team members.

Contact details

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