

Overview

At Blakehill, our vision is to develop the holistic potential of all our pupils so that they become successful and effective members of society. In order to achieve this, we have high expectations of behaviour, achievement and attendance. Regular and punctual attendance at school is vital if children are to reach their full potential.

As a school, we set a yearly target that is tracked and monitored. We make it clear to pupils and parents that regular attendance is our expectation. We have a series of rewards to promote good attendance and attendance procedures to monitor and manage poor attendance.

All children are legally required to attend school for 190 days each academic year from the term following their fifth birthday. As a school, we will monitor all pupils' attendance data and take all steps possible to support families who are experiencing difficulty. Our school procedures are in accordance with Bradford Local Authority Guidance found at: <https://bso.bradford.gov.uk/Schools/CMSPage.aspx?mid=370>

From September 2017, school staff, parents and pupils will be required to complete a Home/School Agreement that outlines the commitment and responsibility of each party to ensure that children attend school regularly. This *Agreement will be sent out at the beginning of each academic year.*

After consultation with the Governing Body, the following procedures will be adopted:

Rewarding attendance

We have a system of rewards and incentives for good attendance. Attendance data is shared during weekly celebration Assemblies and displayed on a display board outside the Learning Mentor's Room on a weekly basis. Whole school and information on class attendance is shared with parents on the fortnightly school newsletters.

An attendance newsletter is sent to parents at the end of each half term.

Rewards include:

- A weekly class reward of £5 for any class who achieves the school target or above
- A weekly Attendance award for highest attending class. The winning class/classes receive an extra playtime and a star to put on their door
- Termly certificates for 100% attendance and a small treat
- An annual certificate for 100% attendance all year and an additional treat.

Notification of Absence

Procedures

1. If a child is absent from school without notification, the school will contact parents via Eschools on the first day to inform parents in the first instance that their child is absent from school and that no reason for absence has been provided. This is completed daily.
2. A register of absent children, where contact has not been made is kept by the admin staff.
3. If a child is absent for three consecutive days, the parent will be contacted via telephone by school.
4. If there is no response, school will make a home visit on that day. A letter of notification will be left if there is no one at the home address (attached)
5. If a home visit is conducted, a record of this will be kept on CPOMs.
6. If there is still no contact from parents/child does not return to school, the school will seek advice from the relevant agencies – eg Children's Social Care, Education Welfare Office

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Children who are vulnerable or at risk from

A register of pupils who are vulnerable/at risk are kept centrally and by the Learning Mentor, admin staff and in the Attendance file in the Headteacher's office.

On the first day a child is not in school, the parent is contacted via eschools

If contact with the parent is made and the child is not missing from home, the member of staff will follow their school procedures for children who are absent. However, if they are concerned about the welfare of the child (and this is likely to be the case if there is any reason to doubt the reason given by the parent for the child's absence from school), the staff member should discuss the case with the school's designated safeguarding children professional.

The DSL will decide whether a home visit or contact with another agency should be made.

Schools must have systems for monitoring attendance, and where children are attending irregularly the LA education welfare or school attendance service should be notified to ensure the child is safe.

Managing Attendance

Early intervention work is essential for Blakehill order to maintain satisfactory attendance levels. Attendance and attainment are linked. Our Attendance Working Party which includes Governors, School Leaders and our Learning Mentor work together to ensure we have strategic approaches to best manage overall attendance and achieve the government persistent absence target of 10% (Sept 2015)

Intent

Blakehill have devised a three-letter system that enables us to continuously and consistently monitor and address poor school attendance. It provides us with the opportunity to target non-attendance methodically and progressively up to and including the point at which a referral to an Education Welfare Officer and/or the Legal Panel may be necessary. The system is based on a series of model letters that are sent to parents when there are concerns about any emerging patterns of absenteeism.

It is intended to apply essentially to absence that is unauthorised, but is also applied in certain circumstances to target patterns of absence which are authorised but which are beginning to cause concern. *Schools should, however, decline to continue to authorise such absences once doubts arise as to their legitimacy.*

Implementation

- The Learning Mentor runs a whole school attendance report at the end of each half term. Pupils whose attendance is becoming a concern are quickly and easily identified. This is shared with the Head of School and SLT.
- Pupils whose attendance is a concern (below 95%) are identified and a colour coding system is used to prioritise pupils and prompt regular monitoring and immediate intervention/action.
- The 4 letter system is used to notify parents of their child's attendance, the concerns that school has and the actions that will be implemented as a result to monitor and improve attendance (see table below).
- Pupils who have an overall attendance % of <95% are placed on a register. Measures taken to address poor attendance are recorded (CPOMS) and attendance file. The attendance of these pupils continues to be monitored.

Persistent Absentees

- A persistent absentee register is generated (pupils who are identified as persistent absentees - attendance of 90% or below)

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- Individual persistent absentee cases are examined by the Head of School and Learning Mentor to establish reasons for absences. A flow chart is used to determine actions. (see Leave of Absence and Persistent Absentee managing Attendance flowcharts)
- All pupils classed as persistent absentees are entered on a RAG rated excel spreadsheet. The attendance of these pupils is monitored on a weekly basis.
- Parents are invited into school to meet with Learning mentor/ member of the Senior Leadership Team. A signed record of attendance meeting is completed and recorded on CPOMs

Impact

- In most cases Letters 1 and 2 brings about a rapid improvement in attendance and no further action is required. (Many parents, on receiving Letter 2, comment that they had been unaware that their child's attendance was causing concern and they often respond positively.)
- The measures that school is taking to manage pupil attendance is made clear to parents. Parents are held accountable for their child's attendance
- The system provides a clear record of the school's own efforts to improve attendance should it subsequently be necessary to involve an Education Welfare Officer/ or the legal panel.

Leave of Absence

In line with new government guidelines term time holidays are no longer permitted. All requests for term time absence will be termed as "leave of absence". The school will not authorise any requests for leave of absence other than in exceptional circumstances. Any request for leave of absence should be made in writing to the Head of School.

If a child is taken out of school for a leave of absence then a Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued. Fixed Penalty Notices are calculated as follows:

£60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

£120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but before 28 days.

Failure to pay before 28 days is likely to lead to prosecution.

Removal from the register

A pupil will be removed from the register if they have 21 days of unauthorised absence that must run concurrently.

Registration Procedures

Each day is divided in to 2 sessions and an electronic register is taken at the start of each session.

Morning register opens at 8.50 and is closed at 9.00. Pupils who register after this will be classed as an unauthorised absence. Pupils who register after 9:00am will have a late mark. After 9:30am, pupils will received a 'U' (unauthorised) mark. Unauthorised marks will be followed up by the Learning Mentor and will refer to the SLT where necessary.

Reporting Absence

All parents are asked to inform school by 9.30am on the first day of absence, stating the reason.

Authorised Absence

Absence can be authorised for a number of reasons. These include:

- Illness

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- Medical or dental reasons but we do ask that check -ups and non – emergency appointments are made during holiday times or after school
- Education off site
- Exclusion
- Traveller absence
- Religious festivals
- Approved sporting activity
- Enforced closure for the whole school
- Any other exceptional circumstance

Unauthorised absence

Absences can be unauthorised for a number of reasons. These include:

- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Holidays in term time
- No reason yet provided
- Late after the register has closed.

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Managing Attendance

Four Letter System

An attendance report is generated at the end of each half term (every 6 weeks).

Pupils whose attendance is a concern are identified and a colour coding system is used according to attendance %. The attendance team analyses the case of each child individually to identify reasons for absence.

Parents will receive a letter regarding their child's absence should it fall in to one of the Becoming Unsatisfactory/Cause for Concern categories.

Parents should make arrangements to discuss strategies for improving attendance with a member of our Senior Leadership Team / Learning Mentor

A penalty fine and /or referral to EWO (education Welfare Officer) can be issued if a child's absence does not improve despite all of the school's efforts taken to address poor attendance

Descriptor	Attendance %	Actual days in school	Number of days absent	Learning Hours lost	Preventative – school based action
Excellent	98% - 100%	188 - 190	0-2	0-10	
Good	96% - 98%	182 - 186	4-8	20-38	
Becoming Unsatisfactory	95% Letter 1 Notification of below National Average	181+	10	48 +	
	93% - 94% Letter 2 Notification of Concern	177+	13 +	65 +	
	91-92% Letter 3 Notification of Concern and Meeting with Learning Mentor	175+	15 +	75 +	
Cause for concern Persistent Absentee	90% and below Letter 4 Persistent Absentee	< 171	19+	95+	Legal – external agency action
	Actions: Parent meeting with a member of Schools Senior Leadership Team/ Learning Mentor Attendance meeting form completed Identify reasons for persistent absence Ascertain attendance contract/clarify expectations Child placed on RAG register and attendance monitored weekly Governors aware				
Little /No improvement	Actions: PENALTY FINE REFERRAL EWO (Education Welfare Officer)				

Letter 1 95% Notification of Below National Average -Letter of Concern

Dear Parent/Carer

Child's name _____ class _____ Attendance _____

I am writing to inform you of your child's current attendance, as it is below the National average of 96%.

Please refer to the Attendance Newsletter for attendance guidelines on how this will now be monitored.

Many thanks

Mrs P Corbridge

Blakehill Primary School Attendance Procedures**Letter 2 – 93% - 94% threshold Letter of Concern**

Date

Name and address of parent

Dear Parent

Re: Name of pupil Dob: School:

I am writing to advise you that «forename»'s school attendance is causing concern as it has fallen to «percentage_attendance»% and as a result we are becoming concerned that «forename» is missing a significant part of learning. I have enclosed a copy of «forename»'s attendance record which shows an analysis of attendance, punctuality and whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Regular attendance is extremely important as missing school can have an impact on learning, and as I am sure you are aware it is a legal requirement. Good attendance enables students to keep up with the work required.

I will continue to monitor «forename»'s attendance and I look forward to seeing an improvement. If possible, and again if it is medical please ensure we have relevant doctor's notes and appointment details.

If there are any particular circumstances that the school may not be aware of which is having an influence on «forename» attending school regularly, please do not hesitate to contact me. However, it does no harm in speaking with the teacher or attendance team, because together we can make a difference.

Yours sincerely

Head of Year / Headteacher or other relevant Pastoral Personnel

cc Education Welfare Officer – *(for information only and to be available on request)*

Enc Record of attendance School Home/ School Agreement

Blakehill Primary School Attendance Procedures**Letter 3 – 91% - 92% threshold****Letter of Concern and Attendance Meeting Request**

Date

Name and address of parent

Re: Name of pupil Dob: School:

Dear Parent

I am writing to inform you that «forename»'s Attendance is still causing concern. We are very worried that continued poor attendance is affecting «forename»'s progress and we need to meet with you urgently.

You are required to attend a meeting with a member of the Attendance Team to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date:

Time:

Should «forename»'s attendance remain irregular; the Local Authority may be requested to take more formal action. This could result in a Penalty Notice and/or prosecution through the Magistrates court for failing to ensure regular school attendance of your child under **Section 444 Education Act 1996**.

Medical evidence is now required for any future absences to be authorised with immediate effect.

We look forward to meeting you to discuss any concerns you may have so we can continue to support our students in making good progress and I hope that you will work with us to improve «forename»'s attendance and therefore avoid the need for legal proceedings to be implemented. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me on the number above.

Yours sincerely

Learning Mentor /Head of School

cc Education Welfare Officer - Encs
Record of Attendance
School Home /School Attendance Agreement

Letter 4 – 90% and <90% threshold Notification of Persistent Absenteeism

Dear xxx

Re: Child Name: xxx DOB: xxx School:

As Head of School for Blakehill Primary School, it has been brought to my attention that xxx has been absent from school for xxx sessions this school year/over the previous xxx weeks. I enclose a record of XXX's attendance.

As parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually.

With effect from September 2015 schools have been advised by the government's Department for Education (DfE) that the Persistent Absence (PA) threshold is 10%.

This means that if a child/young person has an overall attendance of 90% or less over a given period, they will be classified as a persistent absentee pupil.

I am therefore writing to inform you that if attendance fails to improve during the next **(6)** weeks, school may have no option other than to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. Fixed Penalty Notices are calculated as follows:

£60 per parent per child if paid within 21 days.

£120 per parent per child if paid after 21 days but before 28 days.

Failure to pay before 28 days is likely to lead to prosecution.

Your child's case could also be passed to the Local Authority Attendance Officer for review.

With this in mind, you are required to attend a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss this matter further at the date and time below.

Date:

Time:

Yours sincerely

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Attendance Meeting Record				
Title/Reason	Attendance/Punctuality	Date:		Time:
Child/ren:	Name:	Year Group:	Dob:	
Present at the meeting:				
Attendance	Unauthorised Absence	Authorised Absence		
Total Lates:		Unexplained abs:		
Record				
ANY PROBLEMS AT HOME/SCHOOL I.E. BULLYING ETC THAT MAY AFFECT ATTENDANCE/NEED SUPPORT?				
	Medical:			
	School:			
	Bullying:			
	Community:			
	Home:			
	Transport:			

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	Planned Holidays			
	Medical:			
Outcomes/Action (include attendance target)				
Check address / telephone numbers/email address of those with Parental Responsibilities and Day to Day care				
Mum: Full name:		address		
Dad: Full name:				
Other: Full name		address		
Email: Home. Work.		Telephone: Home. Work. Mobile.		
I must remind you that as parent(s) it is your legal responsibility, as stated under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure that your child attends the school at which he/she is registered, regularly and punctually. Failure to do so may result in a Penalty Notice being issued against you and/or legal proceedings being considered.				
Staff Signature		Date:		Print Name
Parent Signature		Date:		Print Name

