



**BEAL VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

*Part of Crompton House CofE Multi Academy Trust*

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# Attendance Policy

**Approved by:** Governing Body

**Date:** January 2024

**Last reviewed on:** January 2025

**Next review due by:** January 2029

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

### RATIONALE

At Beal Vale Primary School we believe that attendance and punctuality at school is not only a legal requirement, but is fundamental to the child's development and attainment. Local Authorities, MATs Schools, Parents and the wider community all have a role to play in improving attendance. At Beal Vale Primary School we have implemented procedures designed to ensure that all our pupils attend regularly. Beal Vale Primary School believes that the regular education of all children, irrespective of age, gender, race or ability is crucial to each and every pupil because our school exists to serve the families of Oldham, working together for the development of our children with the belief 'Learning is for life. Enjoy the journey' at our core.

All members of our community, children, staff, parents, governors and friends work in partnership towards the values; Responsibility, Respect and Reflection in all we do. With this common bond we recognise the uniqueness of each child. Therefore we aim to develop their particular talents and needs, thus allowing them to achieve their full potential.

The regular attendance of children at Beal Vale Primary School is a key responsibility of all parents/guardians, in conjunction with the school and Attendance Service who work together with parents. Without regular attendance our pupils cannot make the progress we want for them. The accurate keeping of registers and persistence in chasing up reasons for absence are crucial if we are to maintain a course of improvement.

From the age of 5 children are required by law to attend school for 190 days of the year, unless the child is ill or because of other extenuating circumstances. It is the parent's duty to see the child is sent to school, arrives on time, in correct clothing, and in a condition to learn e.g. not too tired.

Parents should ensure their children arrive at school on time, properly attired and in a condition to learn. Parents need to see themselves as partners with schools in the education of their children. This includes making sure that pupils complete homework on time and that their children keep school rules about behaviour. If the school has concerns about a pupil being absent or do not accept the explanation for an absence as genuine, the headteacher will raise the matter with the Education Welfare Service.

### Introduction

Children of school-age who are registered at a school must attend school every day. For your children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly. Regular attendance is important, not just because the law requires it but because it is the best way of ensuring that your child makes the most of the educational opportunities in order to achieve well. However, we accept that there may be occasions when a child has to be absent, e.g. because of illness. It is very important, therefore, that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this policy sets out how together we can achieve this.

### Why Regular Attendance is important

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's education and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

During the course of a year, attendance percentages equate as follows:-

10 days absent - 95%

19 days absent - 90%

29 days absent - 85%

38 days absent - 80%

47 days absent - 75%

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

### Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised Absence – An absence is classified as authorised when a child is away from school for a reason, e.g. if a child has been unwell and the parent notifies school to explain the absence. **Only the Headteacher can authorise an absence.**

The Head teacher may authorise absence if: -

- A child is ill
- The child is attending a doctor or dentist's surgery or a hospital
- Religious observance
- A death of an immediate family member

**The head teacher may request evidence to support absence from school for any of the above.**

Unauthorised Absence – Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no authorisation has been given. This includes –

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily;
- Absences that have never been properly explained;
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthday trips;
- Holidays in term time not agreed.
- Children who arrive at school after registers have closed;
- Persistent absences due to sickness that are not supported by medical advice.
- Persistent lateness.

This type of absence can lead to the Local Education Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings, e.g. Penalty Notices. A pupil has to be absent from school in one of these circumstances for at least 10 sessions in a ten-week rolling period before being issued with a Penalty Notice. A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee (PA)' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

In every case, early intervention is essential to prevent the problem worsening. Prior to engagement of the Education Welfare Officer, the school may issue letters to parents clearly defining the concerns within school regarding a pupil's absence. It is hoped that a quick response and improvement in levels of attendance will prevent the need for EWO involvement.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

All PA cases are automatically made known to the Education Welfare Officer.

### Absence Procedures

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of the absence via the Studybug app;
- Give a valid reason for the absence, stating the nature of the illness if the absence is health related;
- If your child is absent for more than 3 consecutive days, if you are part of an attendance management plan or have attendance lower than 90% you may be asked to provide a Doctor's note stating the nature of the illness and the amount of days your child will be absent from school.

If your child is absent we will:

- Telephone on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you;
- Conduct a welfare check on the 3rd day of absence;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer;
- Refer the matter to the Education Welfare Officer if attendance moves below 90%

An attendance letter is sent to all families at regular intervals during the school year to keep you informed of your child's current level of attendance (Appendix B). This is categorised by colour, in line with the Oldham Authority attendance expectations (Appendix A).

Parents are encouraged to work with staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

### Medical Appointments

Should a child have a medical appointment, it is expected that they return to school to complete the school day. Appointment cards with times and dates should be shown to school when taking your child out.

### Punctuality

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting important information and news for the day. Learning starts at **8.45am PROMPT**. It is vital that your child is in class for the start of the school day. They also miss social time with their friends before lessons start. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

### How we manage lateness

The school gates open at 8.30am and the doors to classes open at **8.45am**. We expect your child to be in class at that time.

Classroom doors are closed at **8:55am** and registers marked by **9:00am**. Lessons start at **8.55am PROMPT**. Your child will receive a late mark if they are not in by that time.

From 08.55am classroom doors are closed. All children arriving after this time will come into school via the main entrance. The office staff will admit the children and record the late marks (L).

Children arriving at school after 9.15am will be recorded as late after the registers have closed (U) and signed in the attendance book by a member of the office staff. The office will then begin the first day absence calls.

All children arriving after close of the registrations must be signed in by an adult using the InVentry System.

At 9.00am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean that you could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with the Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

### Afternoon Registers

Registers must be submitted by staff straight after lunch before the afternoon lessons commence. This should be by 1.30pm.

### Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's education as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time. Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

**There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday. The Governors have advised the Head teacher not to authorise holidays for any pupils in any circumstances.**

Therefore, any application for leave must only be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances are exceptional and warrant the granting of leave. **All requests for a holiday/absence in term time should be made in writing by email, written letter or absence form which is available from the school office.**

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice. Where an unauthorised holiday is taken, the school is required to notify the Local Authority on the first day of absence and a fixed penalty fine will be issued.

Unauthorised holidays taken will be followed by an application to the Local Education Authority for the implementation of a Fixed Penalty Fine. This constitutes a fine of £80 per child if paid within 21 days. The fine increases to £160 if paid after this but within 28 days. The fine will apply to each parent of each child who fails to attend school. Both Penalty Notices must be paid. If the fine is not paid, the parent/carer will be prosecuted for the non-attendance and will be summonsed to appear in Court. If a parent gets a second fine for the same child within three years, the amount will be £160. Parents can only be fined twice within a three-year period. After that, other steps like a parenting order or prosecution may be taken.

By adhering to this course of action, the school is working in the best interest of the child in that absence from school has a negative impact on educational achievement. All schools have to report on absences and children with 10% or more absence from school are classified as persistent absentees by the Department for Education.

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets. Through the school year we monitor absences and punctuality to show us where improvements need to be made.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is 96%. Our target is to achieve better than this, however, because we know that good attendance is the key to successful education.

Please do not let your child miss out. Please support our school in providing your child with the education they deserve.

The people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:-

- Mr Adil Rashid– Head teacher
- Mrs Gillian Buckley- School Business Manager/Attendance Officer

### The Legal Framework

Schools and local authorities-

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence.
- To ensure every pupil has access to full time education to which they are entitled.
- Act early to address patterns of absence.

Parents

- To perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual for their lessons.

This advice summarises the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance and explains how they apply to local authorities, head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.

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

### Strategies to promote good attendance

#### School Newsletter

Beal Vale newsletter often includes an item to highlight the importance of good attendance and punctuality. It regularly reminds parents of the importance of attendance.

#### End of Term Attendance Award

Pupils are awarded a pin badge for 100% attendance on a termly basis during Reward Assembly. The pin badge is bronze for the first term, silver for the second term and gold for a full year of 100% attendance.

#### End of Year Attendance Award

Pupils with 100% attendance for the full year are rewarded at the end of the school year. The award is presented during the final assembly of the year.

#### Parent's Evening

Parent's evenings provide an opportunity for class teachers to praise and recognise excellent attendance or share any attendance concerns.

# Improving School Attendance

All parents or carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child regularly attends school.

Regular attendance gives the greatest opportunity to learn new things and develop their skills and friendships and is an important step towards reaching each child's full potential.

The statistical links between attendance and achievement are very strong. Recognising poor behaviour and school attendance may be a sign of abuse, neglect, special needs, or vulnerability (NSPCC). Attendance is a safeguarding issue- it could be an early indicator or a symptom of a longer-term problem.



School attendance for all Oldham pupils has never been as important and must remain a priority so that children are given their chance to achieve their potential, they are **seen** and are **safe**.

It is especially important for our most vulnerable children so they can be linked to universal services. It's seriously detrimental to children to miss school because:

- A child who misses school twice per month will lose out on 18 days' education across the school year – that's nearly four weeks.
- Children who miss a substantial amount of school fall behind their peers and can struggle to catch up, this leads to big gaps in learning and confidence.
- It can be hard for a child who misses lots of school to form relationships with their classmates.
- Missing school just 10 days a year can significantly impact on outcomes - pupils who miss between 10 and 20% of school (that's 19 to 38 days per year) stand only a 35% chance of achieving five or more good GCSEs, compared to 73% of those who miss fewer than 5% of school days.
- Poor attendance also reflects badly on the child's school. [Ofsted](#) expect all schools to have good attendance rates, and they are marked down in inspections if their absence figures are too high.



Date:

Dear Parent/Carer

Re: Attendance

As I'm sure you will have seen in the National and Local Media, school attendance has become a key focus of the Department of Education and Oldham Local Authority Post-remote learning due to COVID. Attendance in school remains the biggest factor that can affect children's educational outcomes and as such it is vitally important for school and home to maintain communication about your child's attendance and any support we can offer to keep this as high as possible.

Congratulations, your child, \_\_\_\_\_, has achieved an attendance record of \_\_\_\_\_ since September 20??. This places them within the **Highest** category for attendance.

The Government require 95% attendance from all school aged children and as such we are required to communicate with all parents when their child falls below this percentage for any reason.

We are aware that there may be genuine reasons for these absences that you have communicated to school or more recently attendance may have been affected due to COVID. Our aim is to keep you informed of your child's current attendance, what that means educationally and keep you informed of the next steps we will be taking in school. This may include attendance awards/rewards for excellent attendance or attendance meetings to offer support. As you may be aware, unauthorised or poor levels of absence can lead to a Penalty Notice (fine) being issued by the Local Authority.

Attached is a helpful handout from Oldham Council to explain the Local requirements for attendance. Above we have indicated which coloured category your child's attendance currently falls into.

These letters will be sent out at the end of every half term and will help you to monitor your own child's attendance.

Your child's class teacher is always available to discuss your child's attendance and offer advice regarding wider issues. Alternatively, should you wish to discuss this matter with me, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0161 770 7350 or by email [admin@bealvaleprimary.com](mailto:admin@bealvaleprimary.com)

Yours Sincerely,

Mr A Rashid

Head Teacher



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Congratulations, your child, \_\_\_\_\_, has achieved an attendance record of \_\_\_\_\_ since September 20???. This places them within the **Green** category for attendance.

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Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, has achieved an attendance record of \_\_\_\_\_ since September 20???. This places them within the **Yellow** category for attendance.

The Government require 95% attendance from all school aged children and as such we are required to communicate with all parents when their child falls below this percentage for any reason.

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Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, has achieved an attendance record of \_\_\_\_\_ since September 20???. This places them within the **Orange** category for attendance.

The Government require 95% attendance from all school aged children and as such we are required to communicate with all parents when their child falls below this percentage for any reason.

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Your child, \_\_\_\_\_, has achieved an attendance record of \_\_\_\_\_ since September 20??. This places them within the **RED** category for attendance.

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