



## Attendance Policy

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Policies for Parental Partnership, Multidisciplinary Co-operation and Exclusion.

Taking measures to ensure that pupils attend school as often as possible is important for their continuity of education and their improvement overall. For pupils at Beacon Hill the issues are different than those for mainstream pupils as the vast majority of them come in by school transport but this does not mean that from time to time issues do not occur and this policy aims to put in place the systems necessary.

The aims of this policy are

1. To ensure that pupils attend school when at all possible.
2. to ensure procedures are in place which meet the legal requirements about pupil attendance.
3. To ensure the legal requirements in terms of monitoring and reporting absence rates are met.
4. To ensure that parents and carers understand the procedures and are encouraged where necessary to support the school in its efforts to ensure attendance.

This policy addresses specifically three of the current school aims.

**that promotes a happy, healthy atmosphere of security, trust and respect.**

If the pupil and the parents feel that school is a happy, secure, environment then they will be keen to come to school and hopefully no difficulties will arise.

**that actively develops parental partnerships for the benefit of the pupils**

It is important in all matters of school attendance that parents are sure of any procedures and are kept informed of any concerns that the school may have. Generally good overall relationships such as we strive to maintain should enable any concerns to be dealt with openly and frankly.

**that develops pupils independence and self advocacy, and confidence to make informed choices.**

As pupils get older they too need to develop a sense of awareness of the need for reliability and punctuality to prepare them for the world of work.

### Principles

1. The aim of working with pupils and parents to resolve any concerns underpins any work in this field.

2. Multi disciplinary work is also vital, as it may be that support from the school doctor or nurse is the most effective way to establish improved attendance by a specific pupil.
3. Where necessary the advice and support of the Children's Services teams may be helpful particularly where they are already involved with the family.
4. The advice and support of the Educational Welfare Officer for the school will be valuable. Monthly meetings will be held between the Headteacher/Deputy Heads and School Nurses to discuss any issues and agree a way forward where attendance is felt to be an issue.
5. Legal requirements should always be carried out including the requirement to provide information.
6. Any action taken with regard to this policy will be acted on according to the Equal Opportunity policy.
7. The authority policy on serious non-attendance will be followed in all relevant cases.
8. Permanent and Temporary exclusions will be dealt with in accordance with the Authorities recommendations and the Governors Policy.

### Practice

1. Registers will be kept twice daily by each class. Information from registers will be transferred daily onto the SIMS system to ensure appropriate ease of access to data.
2. Registers will be formally closed at **9.30.a.m** with pupils marked as late from then on.
3. The Headteacher or deputy and school nurse will be informed daily of the names of absent pupils with particular attention drawn to the names of pupils who are absent for more than a week.
4. Parents will be informed of their responsibility to let us know the reason for a pupil's absence either by phone or in writing.
5. Staff will add the reason for absence, where known, into the register.
6. If a parent does not inform us by the second day of the absence of the reason for that absence then either the school nurse or the teacher will ring up the

family to confirm the reason for the absence and offer any support which may be necessary.

7. If the problems are practical ones perhaps to do with bus times etc. the school will do all in their power to help the family solve the issues.
8. Parents will be told of the procedures in place to apply for permission for holidays in school time and these procedures will be strictly adhered to. Parents will also be reminded that the school has taken the decision not to authorise any holidays in school time except in very rare circumstances. This is to reflect the schools commitment to pupils learning and their need to be in school.
9. Governors will be informed of the rate of absence since the last meeting in each Headteachers report. Any specific issues with regard to absence or lateness will also be reported but individual pupils' confidentiality will be respected.
10. Where a pupil has persistent absence eg they are absent for more than 20% of occasions whatever the reason this pupil will be discussed monthly by SMT and EWO. In some cases there are valid reasons for this especially for children with chronic illness however with the support of school nurses many of these young people can be enabled to attend.
11. Any pupils who have very good attendance over a term or a year will have that attendance celebrated in the weekly newsletter.
12. The level of absence as reported to Governors will also be reported to parents in the newsletter.
13. The Attendance of children in vulnerable groups such as Looked After Children and children who have free school meals will also be analysed and reported annually to ensure there is no difference between the attendance of people in specific groups. Where this is the case action will be taken to improve this.
14. The school will set an annual target to improve overall attendance and absence for any specific reason. These targets will take account of the schools previous attendance and attendance in similar schools. The targets will always be challenging and reflect the schools commitment to attendance. In 2010/11 these targets are:

Issue	Targets 2010/11	Results 12.1.11
Overall Attendance	93%	85.5%
Unauthorised absence	0.5%	1.5%
100% Attendance	10%	27%
Persistent Absence ( Defined as pupils absent more that 20% of sessions)	10%	11.2%
Percentage absence for illness	4.5%	5.1%

15. Pupils attending other schools through their statement of Special Educational Needs will be marked present in pencil and their attendance at that school checked when they will then be marked present or absent as necessary.
16. Attendance of pupils of non statutory school age for example in Early Years or 6<sup>th</sup> Form will be treated in the same way by the school although there are different legal parameters.
17. Pupils will be encouraged to bring the register to the office as part of their independence skills work.
18. Occasionally issues occur where pupils regularly attend school when they are unwell. This is bad for the other pupils in the group, the staff and above all the child themselves. Any issues of this kind, which are rare will be dealt with by the school nurses and the Headteacher.
19. Registers will be checked and signed regularly by the Headteacher.