



Be the Best You Can,  
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ATTENDANCE POLICY  
REVIEWED May 2021  
NEXT REVIEW SUMMER 2023

## **Bolney C.E. Primary School**

### **Attendance Policy**

#### **Aim**

The staff and governors of Bolney C.E. Primary School believe that regular attendance and punctuality are essential for success at school and later in life. We recognise that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment. Also there are clear links between attendance and safeguarding children. Encouraging regular attendance and punctuality reflects the school's concern for the welfare of pupils and is considered to be the responsibility of parents/ carers, pupils, the school staff, governors, West Sussex Pupil Entitlement and the wider community.

#### **Principles**

All pupils have the entitlement to regular full-time school attendance. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child has regular attendance at school. Ensuring regular attendance and punctuality is an essential element of pastoral care.

- There is an expectation of regular attendance and punctuality from all pupils.
- Adults will set a good example to pupils.
- The school will acknowledge good attendance and respond quickly to poor attendance.
- Parentally condoned absence is not acceptable and is detrimental to the child's education.
- The school will work in partnership with parents to promote high levels of attendance.

#### **High level of attendance and punctuality will be encouraged by:**

- Adults setting a good example by their own punctuality and regular attendance.
- Stressing the importance of attendance and punctuality by regular communication with parents, including sharing their child's attendance at the end of each term and the end of the year.
- The regular and accurate maintenance of records and statistics.
- The Headteacher will report attendance figures to the Governing body on a regular basis.
- Certificates will be awarded to pupils for 100% attendance within an academic year.

#### **Expectations**

##### **The school expects parents/ carers to be aware of their legal responsibility to:**

- Ensure regular attendance and punctuality for their child.
- Apply for withdrawal from learning (when exceptional circumstances exist), which should be discussed with the Headteacher prior to finalising arrangements. The final decision, however, will rest with the Governing Body.
- Advise beforehand if a child will be arriving late.
- Inform the school by telephone or email on the first day of absence by 9.00am whenever possible. If there is no contact by this time the school will contact the parents/carers. See the section headed 'Reporting Absence' for further detail.
- Contact the school, in confidence, whenever problems occur which may keep their child away from school.

##### **The school expects pupils to:**

- Attend school every day.
- Be punctual for school.
- Take responsibility to catch up with any learning missed through absence (where appropriate).

**All schools are expected to achieve an overall rate of 96% or above attendance.**



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## Late Arrival

- Any child arriving after 8:50am will be regarded as late. Any late pupils should enter the school through the main entrance where the register will be updated stating the pupil is late and the reason is recorded in the register.
- The register closes at 9.20am. If a pupil arrives after this time they will be marked as absent for the morning session and the reason will be recorded in the late book.
- Parents are asked to telephone the school if they know a child is going to be late.
- Patterns of lateness - Following persistent lateness, parents will be sent a letter from the Headteacher and a meeting may be requested. If there is no improvement the matter will be referred to West Sussex Pupil Entitlement.

## Reporting Absence

A child's absence is to be reported by email or phone, (an answerphone message can be left if no reply) before 9am of the day of absence whenever possible, stating the reason why the child is not at school and the likely amount of absence, where possible. If the school has not been contacted regarding a child's absence by 9.30am the school will follow this procedure:

- Contact parents/carers by phone.
- If there is no response the school will contact other emergency contact numbers. Parents and carers are asked to provide phone numbers for four emergency contacts.
- If there is still no response we will consider the matter from a safeguarding perspective, following our Child Protection Policy. We will consider if there are any existing child protection or safeguarding concerns for the child – if there are we will notify the relevant agency of the absence immediately.
- We will also consider if there are any other special circumstances, for example, child or parent disability that may make it difficult for them to make contact with health or other services if they needed to, especially in times of emergency.
- If there any concerns the school will consider making a home visit and contacting the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- If there are significant concerns we will contact the police immediately.

## Responding to Poor Attendance

West Sussex Pupil Entitlement will work in co-operation with the school and parents to ensure the regular attendance of the pupil. The registers are checked on a weekly basis and if a pupil's attendance is below expected levels (90%), without good reason, or there is an irregular pattern of absence, a letter is sent to parents from the school. Further action will be taken by Pupil Entitlement if there is no improvement in attendance.

Genuine illness will be authorised, although the school reserves the right to ask for medical clarification if a child's medical absences are above the amount expected for a usually healthy child. If it has been necessary for a child to have extended absence due to illness, the school will work with the child, parents/carers and any other involved agencies to instigate a re-integration programme for that child. If a pupil's attendance is low due to repeated illness or if a pupil is ill for a period of 5 days or more, we would expect them to have seen a doctor. For illnesses of this pattern or duration, we will ask to see supporting medical documentation.

E.G.

- 1) A signed note/letter or medical certificate from your GP;
- 2) A photocopy or scan of any prescription;
- 3) A signed appointment card or a screen shot of your call to the surgery.



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## Planned Absence

For any planned absence of one session or more (one session is a morning or afternoon), a Withdrawal from Learning Form needs to be completed and given to the school office. This form is available from the school office and the school's website in the Attendance section in the Statutory Info tab. The form needs to be completed and submitted in advance of any planned absence.

## Authorised Absence

- **Genuine illness** - Please also note that we adhere to guidance from the Health Protection agency on preventing the spread of stomach bugs, which recommends that pupils who have suffered from a stomach upset or diarrhoea should be kept away from school for 48 hours from the last 'episode'. As a child may vomit due to causes that are not infectious, eg coughing, migraine, travel sickness, the 48 hour rule would not apply in these cases where the cause is clear. For up to date guidance on other illnesses, please contact the school office.
- **Medical grounds** - Appointments for dental/ hospital check-ups should be avoided during school time if possible. The child should be collected from and delivered directly back to school. Pupils should only be absent for the duration of the appointment plus travelling time.
- **Compassionate grounds**
- **Wedding of a close family member** - parents, siblings, grandparents, aunt or uncle - up to 3 days
- **Religious observances**
- **Other absences for special circumstances** – to be agreed with governors

**Any other absences will be unauthorised**

## Holidays

In line with the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013** the Governors of Bolney C.E. Primary School have agreed that holidays or similar leisure activities in term time will not be authorised. Any request for absence should be made by completing and submitting the Withdrawal from Learning Form. Should there be an exceptional circumstance necessitating a child's absence from school due consideration will be given to each case. The submitted Withdrawal from Learning Form will be completed by the school and returned to the parent/carer stating whether the request has been authorised or not. If a request for withdrawal from learning for an extended absence has been not authorised a letter will be sent to parents/carers stating that a referral to West Sussex County Council may be made.

## Fixed Penalty Notice

The Fixed Penalty Notice is a fine sent by the West Sussex County Council to each parent of each child who has taken more than 10 sessions (5 full days) of unauthorised absence within a 10 week period. This is under the School Attendance: Education Act 1996/Section 23 Anti-Social Behaviour Act and Section 16 Crime and Disorder Act. The Local Authority reserves the right to consider whether to issue a fine or take alternative legal action.

A Fixed Penalty Notice is £60 and is issued to **each** parent for **each** child and should be paid within 21 days. If the Penalty Notice is not paid within this period of time then each parent will be issued with a second Fixed Penalty Notice for £60, increasing the amount to £120 per parent per child. Both invoices should then be paid within 28 days.



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If it is proven by the Local Authority that the unauthorised leave was taken and the fines remain unpaid after this period of time, parent/carers may be prosecuted for failing to ensure regular and punctual school attendance of their child/children. This is a criminal offence under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and carries a maximum fine of £1,000 per parent/ carer and/or a parenting order or a community service order. The Local Authority state that there is no statutory right of appeal once a Fixed Penalty Notice has been issued.

**We ask parents and carers to try to ensure their child is in school every day where possible.**

**To attain over 96% attendance a child needs to be in school for at least 183 days out of the 190 school days.**

**Please see the chart below:**

Every School Day Counts Your Child Deserves an Education					
190 school days in each year	10 days absence				
	180 days of education	19 days absence			
		171 days of education	29 days absence		
	161 days of education		38 days absence		152 days of education
		143 days of education			
	100% Excellent	95% Good	90% Poor	85% Very Poor	80%
This is the best chance of success. Get your child off to a flying start. You should be aiming for 96% and above.		WORRYING Less chance of success. It's harder for your child to make progress.		SERIOUS CONCERN Not fair on your child. Could lead to court action or Fixed Penalty Notice.	