



## Bowhill Primary School Attendance & Absence Policy

### **Philosophy**

Bowhill Primary School is committed to providing a full and efficient educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit from education, good attendance is crucial. As a school we do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance for all pupils. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

It is the policy of our school to celebrate achievement. Attendance is a critical factor to a productive and successful school career. Our school will actively promote and encourage 100 per cent attendance for all our pupils.

Our school will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. We recognise that parents have a vital role to play and that there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems that can be utilised whenever there is concern about attendance.

If there are problems which affect a pupil's attendance we will investigate, identify and strive in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve those problems as quickly and efficiently as possible. We will adopt a clearly focused approach aimed at returning the pupil to full attendance at all times.

### **Objectives**

- to encourage full attendance and punctuality
- to record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies to minimise its occurrence
- to acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance
- to ensure a consistent approach throughout the school

### **Statutory Duty of Schools**

The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day; once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll.

### **Principles**

Parents are legally responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly. We will work towards ensuring that all pupils feel supported and valued. We will send a clear message that if a pupil is absent, she/he will be missed. We will consult with all members of the school community and the Education Welfare Service in developing and maintaining the whole school attendance policy.

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We will encourage parents/carers to be actively involved in promoting their child's attendance. We will ensure that all staff are aware of the requirements of the registration process and that they receive training on Registration Regulations and the Law relating to attendance.

Regular information will be sent to parents and pupils informing them of attendance rates and related issues. Promoting positive staff attitudes to pupils returning after absence will ensure regular evaluation of attendance policy and procedures by Senior Managers and the school governors. Attendance will be an important feature of the school Improvement Plan. Consistent and rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures will be in place.

### **Procedures**

Registration:

Reception, Year One and Year Two (Foundation and Key Stage One)

9.00 am and 1.00pm

Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 (Key Stage Two)

8.55am and 1.25pm

### **Absence:**

Registers are marked at this time with present/absent. If a pupil arrives after registration but before 09.20, they will be marked as 'late'. Where a pupil arrives after the close of register without a valid reason, an unauthorised late absence mark will be applied. Parents/ carers are asked to inform the school office at the earliest opportunity if their child will not be in school and **give clear reasons for the absence**. This will be judged by the school as either 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' absence. If a child has more than 10 sessions (i.e. 5 days) unauthorised absence, school will inform the Education Welfare Service who will then issue the parents/carers with a penalty notice which may result in a fine.

If the school office has not received notification of a child's absence by 9.30am of the first day of absence, the parents/carers will be contacted by the school. If contact cannot be made, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and the EWO alerted.

### **Avoidable Absence:**

The Governors follow government guidelines and do **not** generally authorise absence for a holiday or family event in term time as this significantly disrupts a child's education. Parents are informed in the prospectus and newsletters that they do not have an automatic right to absence. In exceptional, unavoidable circumstances the school may authorise absence, but this is at the discretion of the Headteacher. The extra cost of a holiday in the school holidays does not constitute an exceptional circumstance for absence. Absence will not normally be authorised during the first half of term of the school year when children are settling into new routines, or during national testing periods. Parents/carers are required to complete the school's absence request form to request absence for their child.

### **The target setting process.**

Governors are required to set targets for attendance. Each year the attendance statistics are analysed and new targets set to try and reduce absence. Currently our attendance target is: 96.5%.

### **Monitoring progress towards targets.**

Our School Administrators, Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer monitor absence on a regular basis. Routine reports are produced and discussed. If there are causes for concern, strategies to overcome problems are implemented. The Head Teacher includes attendance issues in the

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termly report to *Governors* and, where appropriate, these are addressed in the *School Management and Improvement Plan*.

It is essential that everyone involved in promoting attendance is clear about the important role that must be carried out in order to raise standards. Responsibility to promote attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community.

Adopted Date: September 2016

Review Date: September 2017