



Bowhill Primary School
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22nd September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

At Bowhill Primary we are committed to providing a full and effective educational experience for all students. We believe that if our children are to benefit from education, punctual, daily attendance is crucial. We actively promote and encourage 100% attendance for all our children.

Why is attendance so important?



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. We will keep you updated throughout the year on your child's attendance so we can support your family in achieving excellent attendance for your child/children.

What are the legalities?

There are clear government guidelines around attendance which we follow. It makes clear that full time education is the legal responsibility of a child's parent/carer. We will do everything we can to support our families to ensure excellent attendance so please do come and speak with us if you need any support. We also have to follow our legal requirement to notify the Local Authority if attendance falls below 90%. However, we will contact you if attendance drops below 95% to put support in place so we can do our best to help you before it drops to this point.

What counts as authorised absence?

You can only allow for your child to miss school if either:

- they are too ill to come in
- you have written permission from me for an exceptional circumstance

It is very unlikely that I will authorise holidays as an exceptional circumstance. This is because we have 190 days of school and 175 non-school days during the year – I would ask you to ensure that any holidays and visits are booked during these non-school days so as to ensure your child is not missing key learning.

Statutory information:

I am legally obliged to take this opportunity to remind you, that should you choose to take your child out of school without the authorisation of the school, then Parental Responsibility Measures could be instigated. This could mean receiving any of the following;

- A Penalty Notice
- A summons to the Magistrate Court which could result in a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment for up to 3 months.

Unauthorised absences can be acquired when;

- 1) Leave has been requested, but the circumstances are such that the school is unable to authorise the leave and it is taken anyway.
- 2) Leave is not requested and/or the school has grounds to believe that the child has been taken out of school for an avoidable reason (example – a family holiday).

Should a Penalty Notice be issued as a result of unauthorised absence then one notice will be issued to each parent/carer for each child involved. Currently, each Penalty Notice is for £120, which is reduced to £60 if paid within the first 21 days. If a Penalty Notice goes unpaid after 28 days, then court proceedings may be initiated. If a previous Penalty Notice has been issued within the current academic year, then the Local Authority may proceed straight to Court.

I would like to stress that a letter such as this has been sent out to all the families in Devon and is in no way suggesting that there is already a concern with your child's attendance. I am sure that by working together we will achieve excellent attendance for all of our families.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Anna Lopez
Headteacher