

Bolsover Infants and Nursery School

Attendance Policy



Information for parents

This Policy has been written in accordance with the wishes of staff, children and Governors of Bolsover Infants and Nursery School.

Updated:November 2012

Bolsover Infants and Nursery School

Mission Statement

We believe that to be successful, all learners require the highest level of access, attendance and engagement with inclusive, high quality educational settings. We will work with all partners in support of this to achieve our aims and objectives.

The School Aims To

- ◆ Promote good attendance and good punctuality as the norm.
- ◆ Demonstrate that good attendance is valued by the school.
- ◆ Endeavour to provide experiences in and out of the classroom of high quality for all our pupils.
- ◆ Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.
- ◆ To raise pupil awareness of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance.
- ◆ To maintain good communication with parents in relation to their child's attendance, offering support and guidance where necessary.
- ◆ To maintain effective working relationships with the Education Social Work Service and other service that promotes good attendance and punctuality.
- ◆ Recognise and support the key role of all staff in promoting and maintaining good attendance.

Statutory Duties:

Section of the Education Act 1996 requires that:

'The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable: to his age, ability and aptitude; and b) to any special educational needs he may have; either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.'

Children's Attendance

Schools are required to take an attendance register twice a day, and this shows whether the pupil is present, engaged in an approved educational activity off-site, or absent. If a pupil of compulsory school age is absent every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school, as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. Only school can authorise the absence, not parents. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing. If a child is absent from school, whether authorised or not, it will be reported as an absent on their attendance figure because they were not at school.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness or other unavoidable cause. These include:

1. Sickness
2. Unexpected / unavoidable causes e.g. Fire/domestic upset/bereavement/severe weather
3. Religious observances - Up to 3 days a year
4. Advanced permission of the school for the following reasons - approved public performance, exceptional family reasons, hospital visits, funerals
5. Dental medical appointments (where this can not be done out of school hours), only authorized for the amount of time needed to attend the appointment.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no 'leave' has been given. This includes:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

The head teacher has the right to unauthorise any absence/s that he/she feels are unnecessary and/or ill-conceived.

Unacceptable reasons for absence include:

- Birthdays
- Sibling inset/snow days/illness etc or parent illness
- Car problems
- Hair cuts, shoe buying, clothes shopping etc
- Not wanting to bring children out in cold weather
- Slight temperature
- Generally feeling under the weather (with no signs of illness)



Lateness

School starts at 8:45 am school doors are shut at 8.55 am. Lateness is classed as any child coming into school between 9.05 am and 9:30am. All children arriving after 8.55 am must report to the office. After 9:30 it is classed as an unauthorised absence. Lateness is monitored monthly.

Attendance Problems:

Parents whose children are experiencing difficulties should contact school at an early stage and work together with staff in resolving any problems. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school or the parent may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the County Council. He/she will also try to resolve the situation with voluntary support, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed these Officers can issue Penalty Notices or use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2,500 and/ or 3 months imprisonment.

Parental requests for leave of absence for their children in term time [\(inc Holiday Requests\)](#)

Parents are strongly urged to avoid taking family holidays during term time

- Requests for leave will not be authorised when national assessments are taking place.
 - Parents requesting leave must do so in writing prior to departure, usually 4 weeks (see appendix). The parent must include specific reasons why the leave is requested during term time
 - Schools may authorise up to 10 school days leave within an academic year provided that there is no other concern about the child's attendance. Where there is concern, the leave will not be authorised.
 - Leave for longer than 10 days will not normally be authorised. If such leave is requested then the Governing Body should consider the application and may authorise it only in exceptional circumstances.
 - It is important for parents to be aware of the school's policy on leave in term time. Any unauthorised leave in term time of more than 10 sessions (5 days) in one term may result in a request from the Headteacher to the LA to issue a Penalty Notice. The Notice is a fine of £50 per parent, per child if paid within 28 days which increases to £100 if paid between days 28 and 42. If the Notice remains unpaid after 42 days the LA will prosecute the parent for the nonattendance of the child at school. This is not a new policy - the Penalty Notice Code of Conduct was agreed by Headteachers and in place in September 2005.
- Each request for leave should be individually considered and this guidance in **no way** affects the Headteachers discretion to authorise or not authorise leave.

**Cheap holidays will not be accepted as an authorisable reason for taking a holiday in term time.
Taking holidays in term time should be avoided wherever possible.**

Parental Responsibilities:

Parents are responsible in law for ensuring that their children of compulsory school age receive an efficient education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs which they may have. Most parents choose to fulfil this responsibility by registering children at a school.

Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance.

Parent's Responsibilities include:

- Ensure that their child arrives at school on time, appropriately dressed and in a 'condition to learn'. (ie not too tired or too hungry to learn.)
- Work in partnership with the school to help their child/children gain an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly and punctually.
- Work in partnership with the school to take an active interest in their child's school career, to reinforce school policies/arrangements on homework, behaviour and approach to learning, to attend parents' evenings and other meetings where necessary.
- Work in partnership with the school and other agencies (as and when appropriate) to resolve issues relating to non-attendance.
- To acknowledge that they have been in receipt of the school's Attendance Policy.
- Notify the school if their child is absent. Contact with the school needs to be made on the first day of absence, ideally first thing in the morning. Parents should provide an explanation for the absence which should be confirmed in writing, when the child returns to school.
- Parents are advised to avoid arranging medical or dental appointments during school hours and, unless unavoidable, not to book holidays during term time.
- Parents must seek permission from their child's headteacher (or authorised representative) prior to any holiday in term time and give advance maximum notice for such a request



Working Partnerships

The school will work with a range of other professionals in order to support children and their families in ensuring good attendance. These include:

- Learning mentor service in school
- EWO service
- School Nurse / School Health
- Family Resource Worker
- Health visitors
- Community Police officers
- Any service deemed necessary to support the family



Monitoring and Reporting

As a school we have a duty to monitor the Attendance Policy and how successful it has been in improving the attendance of children at our school. This will be done on a yearly basis and will involve all staff responsible for attendance, a small contingency of governors and parents/guardians; public opinion will be gathered via the whole school parent questionnaire. We will also evaluate whole school, year group and individual data. We will inform all parents/guardians of their child's attendance on a half termly basis.

Daily Checks

- Daily checks will be carried out on attendance and absences.
- All absences will be followed up.
- Co-ordinator will check with clerical staff for parental phone calls.
- First day response will be carried out on all children who are unaccounted for.

Weekly Checks

- Weekly checks will be made on all children who have been absent that week.
- Any children who have been absent for longer than 5 days will be investigated.
- Investigations will include contacting teacher, headteacher, parents, school nurse, SENCO or EWO

Half-termly Checks

- Half termly checks will be carried out on the Monday, of the last week, of each half term .
- Children will be grouped into: 100% attendance, Above 95%, Between 90% and 95% - Improved / not improved, Between 85% to 90%, Below 85%
- Letters will be sent to parents, on the first Tuesday of the new term, corresponding to their child's attendance record

Rewards and Incentives

- Certificates for 100% attendance at the end of each full term.
- Certificates for significantly improved attendance and attendance above 95% at the end of each full term.
- Use of assemblies to recognise good and improved attendance and punctuality, last Friday of full term @ 2.30pm.
- Use of Education Social Worker to praise good and improved attendance of individuals.
- Rewards for groups/classes of good attendees.
- Praise letters to parents/carers of good and improved attendees, rewards on a termly basis for children have 100% attendance, above 95% and above 90% but have improved.

Monitoring, Support and Guidance for Poor Attendance

- First Day response for non-attendance at school
- Record Keeping of non-attendance
- Late Book for monitoring punctuality
- Sign posting of appropriate services
- Half termly checks on attendance percentages
- Awareness of illness and disability issues that effects attendance
- Good contact with parents in order to support parents
- Information letters for parents of children with attendance below 95%, 90% and 85%



Contact Details...

If you wish to inform the school of an absence please contact 01246 823181. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's attendance or this policy, please contact the school to make an appointment with the headteacher.