

Bishops Tawton Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY



Reporting absence:

Contact the school as soon as possible preferably **before 9.00am by ringing 01271 343002**. You will be expected to tell us your child's name, class, the reason for the absence and if possible the expected return date. Please ring **each day** your child is absent.

Introduction




Bishops Tawton Primary School is a successful school and your child plays his / her part in making it so. We aim to provide an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach their full potential. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend every day, on time, unless the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that we work together to ensure that your child attends regularly and this Attendance Policy sets out how together **we will** achieve this.

Why is Attendance so important?

If attendance is 80%, this means your child will have missed:

1. 1 day EVERY week
 2. 6 days EVERY half term
 3. 12 days EVERY term
 4. 36 days EVERY year
 5. 180 days in five years...
- ...that's nearly ONE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR!**

	100% Attendance	0 days of learning missed	Best chance of success
	95% Attendance	2 weeks of learning missed	Poor attendance: will impact on learning. Risk of prosecution
	90% Attendance	4 weeks of learning missed	
	85% Attendance	5½ weeks of learning missed	Very poor attendance. Negative impact on learning. Will be prosecuted.
	80% Attendance	At least 7½ weeks of learning missed	

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):



A student becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA students are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system.

Why regular attendance is so important:



Learning

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any student's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.



Safeguarding

Your child may be at risk of harm if he / she does not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities of your child encompasses the promotion of good, regular attendance.



The Law Relating to Attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that 'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full-time education suitable:

- (a) to age, ability and aptitude and
- (b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'



The law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Since March 2001 there has been an aggravated offence, where a parent of a child of compulsory school age, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause their child to attend. This could result in going to court or even going to prison.



Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either **AUTHORISED** or **UNAUTHORISED**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. However, at Bishops Tawton Primary School we are trying to build resilience into our pupils and would appreciate parents only keeping off pupils who are very ill.

Unauthorised absences are those which we do not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings. Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- parents/carers 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
- shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- day trips and holidays in term time
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Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any issues with regular absence are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up the absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually makes things worse.

Holidays during Term Time

The law does **not** grant parents automatic rights to take their children out of school during term time- Absence Request forms **must** be completed by families in advance of requests for authorised absence. More detail is given about the circumstances and consequences are on these forms.

An S2 Absence Request form (there is no holiday form) must be used to request absence

If the school refuses a request for term time leave and the child is taken out of school, this will be recorded as unauthorised absence and families may receive a **£60** fine per parent for each child.

Holidays may only be agreed in the following circumstances:

- There are **exceptional** circumstances as to why the holiday must be taken during term time and...
 - The child's attendance rate is over 96% in the current year (except where a child has had a significant period of illness with medical involvement)
 - permission is sought in advance.
 - the dates **do not** fall during SATS week in KS2 or the first three weeks of any term

*Parental time off work is not considered an exceptional reason

(This does not apply if the child is below statutory school age (5years))

To ensure all pupils have good attendance everyone has a role to play:

We issue certificates to reward 100% attendance within an academic year. If your child attends school every day for a term they will receive a bronze certificate, for two consecutive terms a silver and for three consecutive terms a Gold certificate and badge.

Pupils

- Take responsibility to be organised and ready for school

Parent/carers

- Contact the school as soon as possible preferably **before 9.00am by ringing 01271 343002** to report an absence. Please ring **each day** your child is absent.
- If unsure about keeping your child off school, **please send them in**. If they start to feel ill during the day our first aiders will contact you if your child needs to go home.
- If your child has an urgent medical/dental appointment during the school day please telephone the school at least 24 hours in advance, for safeguarding reasons a **responsible adult known to the child** must report to reception to collect.

Attendance Administrator

- Will note all parental absence messages by **9am** each day and then phone parents/carers of any absent pupils from whom we have not had a message – before **9.30am** where possible.
- Analyse the data to identify individuals, groups of learners and patterns of poor attendance and share with the Headteacher and designated Governor to address these issues.
- Work closely with the Headteacher to identify pupils who have attendance concerns and follow the graduated system of school response including parental phone calls, letters, development of a support/reintegration plan, referral to EWO and if required, prosecution.
- Prepare the appropriate paperwork required to support senior staff in applying for a prosecution.
- Develop strategies and monitoring alongside Headteacher and designated member of staff to target pupils with less than **92%** attendance.

Class Teacher

- Accurately record attendance daily and raise the profile of attendance within the class.
- Monitor attendance and highlight any **patterns** in pupil's attendance, raise any concerns with Headteacher asap.

Headteacher

- To raise the profile of “Attendance Matters” across the school and community.
- To **monitor whole school attendance** and feed back to Governors and staff on progress.
- To meet regularly with **Attendance Administrator** to discuss strategies for improving attendance and monitor their impact.

Punctuality Procedures

- All pupils should be in their class rooms from **8.35am registration closes at 8.45am** any time after this will be recorded as a “late” mark. Regular lateness will lead to a meeting between the parents and the class teacher.
- Lateness to lessons mean pupils are missing a key points where initial explanations and instructions are given, this will negatively impact on their learning. Late arrival to class can also disrupt learning for other pupils.

What will happen if my child’s attendance is low?

The stepped sanctions are explained below:

Stage	% of attendance	School Protocols
First absence		Contact with home
1	Less than 97%	Attendance monitored
2	Less than 95%	Attendance letter A1 sent home
3	Less than 92%	Attendance letter A2 sent home, meeting with parents/carers, Educational Welfare Officer informed
4	Less than 90%	(PA) letter A3 sent home further meeting with HT, possible attendance contract, Educational Welfare Officer involved.
5	Less than 90% no improvement	Educational Welfare Officer INTERVENTION/possible legal proceedings - Prosecution