



# Attendance Policy

## Purpose

Regular attendance at school is essential to promote the learning, progress and safeguarding of all pupils. The Belsteads School expects all pupils to attend regularly, reflected in the home-school agreement; a target of 90% attendance is set for all pupils.

The school has, and will continue to take appropriate action when necessary in order to promote the aims of the policy, working in collaboration with parents, carers and the Missing Education and Child Employment Service.

## Aims

- To maximise attendance of all pupils, ensuring maximum learning opportunities.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated at the school.
- To monitor, communicate and support children where attendance is a cause for concern and works in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.
- To analyse attendance data to inform future policy and practice.
- To work closely and make full use of the support from the wider community including the Missing Education and Child Employment Service and multi-agency teams.

## Role and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

### The Governing Body

- To monitor progress towards annual targets attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.
- To communicate the importance of regular attendance to parents and pupils.

### The Head Teacher

- To ensure that the school's aim for attendance are shared regularly with parents and carers, with an emphasis on learning and achievement.
- To provide the governing body with information on attendance, including low attenders and action taken to address this.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties
- To complete referrals to the Missing Education and Child Employment Service and attend relevant meetings

## **Deputy Head Teacher**

- To record the reasons for absence given to them.
- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of ARBOR to record and track attendance
- To prepare relevant attendance reports for the head teacher
- To contact any parent who has not informed the school as to why their child is absent on the first day of absence using school first day calling protocol (Appendix A)
- To liaise with the head teacher regarding contact with persistent absentees
- To liaise with head teacher to ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the head teacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised

## **Class Teacher**

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class

## **Administration**

The school uses ARBOR information management system to record and monitor attendance, ensuring compliance with legal responsibilities. Staff are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.

Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.

## **Absence**

- The School will phone parents/carers on a daily basis when the reason for absence is unknown (see Appendix A)
- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of absence by 9.00am to provide the reason for the absence, including likely duration
- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the deputy head teacher should be informed.

## **Medical or dental appointments**

Absence from school due to medical or dental appointment will be considered as an authorised absence.

Parents/carers are requested to provide written confirmation of these appointments. Whenever possible, parents/carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments out of school hours.

## **Leave of absence during Term Time**

Leave of absence during term time only be granted under exceptional circumstances or for approved educational experiences. Any requests should be put in writing to the head teacher on the school's Leave of Absence request form, available from the school office. Due to a change in legislation, there is no longer entitlement to leave for holidays and this will only be granted due to exceptional circumstance. The head teacher's decision is final. If a leave of absence is requested, unauthorised and still taken, this will be recorded as unauthorised and reported to the Missing Education and Child Employment Service, which could result in the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice.

## **Other absences**

Other absences from school will be considered on an individual basis and a decision will be made by the head teacher to authorise the absence.

## **REPORTING TO PARENTS AND CARERS**

All absences, both authorised and unauthorised, and lateness will be reported to the parent/carer at the end of the academic year within their child's report. During the year, parents will receive a letter if there are concerns about their child's attendance.

## **REWARDS**

- Children who achieve 100% attendance will be presented with certificates
- Children who achieve 100% attendance for the school year will receive a special award at the whole school awards assembly at the end of the academic year
- The highest attending class for each year will be awarded in the whole school awards assembly at the end of the academic year

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

Attendance data will be analysed on a half-termly basis to establish patterns of irregular attendance. This will include pupils with: incomplete weeks; Monday and Friday absences; lateness, periods of extended absence. If concerns are raised by the analysis, parent discussions will occur, either through telephone calls to the parents/carers and/or formal letters stating the attendance and regular lateness of the child and that there is an issue. The school reserves the right to issue fixed term notices to parents.

The deputy head teacher, in liaison with the head teacher, will monitor the impact of the attendance policy and will report attendance rates to the Governing Body on a termly basis.