

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND ABSENCE POLICY

St Bartholomew's Primary School

Date agreed by Governing Board	March 2025
Signature of Chair of Governors	*Bettina Carlyon*
Signature of Headteacher	*Daniel Meyer*
Date to be reviewed by Governing Board	March 2027

This version supersedes all previous versions of this policy.

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND ABSENCE POLICY

INTRODUCTION

1. At St Bartholomew's we expect children to attend school regularly and be on time. Children need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational advantages offered to them.

2. Good attendance patterns start at an early age and it is important that the school, home and children work closely together from the start. Children are expected to attend for a full 190 days of the academic year (380 sessions), unless there is a good reason for absence.

RESPONSIBILITIES

3. We ask that Parents:
   - ensure that their child attends school regularly;
   - ensure that their child arrives on time for school;
   - contact school on first day of absence before 9.15am;
   - support the school in its aims to raise attainment through full attendance at school.

4. The school will ensure:
   - prompt and efficient registration of pupils;
   - immediate contact with parents if a child fails to attend without a satisfactory explanation;
   - regular reviews of registration and attendance procedures to raise awareness of all staff of their roles;
   - promotion and celebration of good attendance and punctuality through assemblies and newsletters;
   - first day calling to ensure wherever possible we know reasons for absence.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

5. There are two types of absence:

   Authorised - where the school approves the pupil absence. This includes instances of absence for which a satisfactory explanation has been provided e.g. illness, attendance at medicals, religious holidays, and exceptional circumstances.

   Unauthorised – where the school will not approve absence. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

6. Parents have the prime responsibility for ensuring that their children attend school regularly and reporting any absences to the school. If a child is unwell, parents should call the school on the first day of absence stating the reason. It is also helpful to send in a note on the child's return for the school's records.

7. If a child is away for some time the school will telephone or write to the parent. Where there are ongoing absences the school may carry out a home visit to ensure their safety. School can also request medical evidence for absences due to illnesses in order to safeguard your child.

8. Concerns regarding attendance and welfare of your child are shared with the local authority as and when required.

9. Poor attendance will be referred to the Local Authority and a Penalty Notice and legal action may result.

1.1 REQUESTS FOR ABSENCE DURING TERM TIME

10. Requests for absence during term time are considered carefully. A child's absence during term time can seriously disrupt their continuity of learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away, they are also less prepared for the lessons building on the missed work after their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement which the school must seek to avoid.

11. Holidays in term time are not a right and will not be granted unless there are exceptional circumstances for requesting them. Therefore, parents are strongly advised to avoid booking a family holiday during term time.

12. If parents or guardians still wish to take their child out of school during term time for whatever reason, they must fill in the request form at Appendix 1 and return it to the school. The form will be passed on to the Headteacher who will decide whether it should be authorised.

13. The Headteacher will then consider whether to authorise the absence. Previous attendance and previous numbers of requests are considered when deciding whether to agree to the holiday. If an absence that has not been agreed goes ahead it will be recorded as unauthorised.

14. If the Headteacher or Governors do not agree the absence and the parents or guardians take their child out of school, the absence will not be authorised. In addition, if parents keep their child away for longer than was agreed, any extra time is recorded as unauthorised.

15. Schools may delete from roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of an agreed return date unless there is a good reason for the continued absence, such as illness.

16. In deciding whether to authorise an absence DfE guidelines will be followed. The Headteacher/Governors will take into consideration:
    - The age of the child.
    - The time of year.
    - The nature of the request and the parents' wishes.
    - The overall attendance pattern of the pupil.

17. The Headteacher and Governors may not authorise an application for extended leave:
    - At the beginning of any term.
    - Within the first term of a child starting school.
    - Any time in Y2 before KS1 SATs.
    - Any time in Y6 before KS2 SATs.
    - Where pupils have been consistently late for school.
    - Where attendance has fallen below 96%.
    - Where there has been an application in the previous year.

1.2 PUNCTUALITY

18. It is important that all children arrive at school on time ready to start learning. Registers are taken promptly at the start of the day, at 9 am, across the school. Children arriving up until 9.00 am should go directly to classrooms. Children arriving after 9.00 am should enter via the office where they collect a late card to show they have been registered. Children arriving half an hour after the start of the day will be given an unauthorised absence for that session. In circumstances such as bad weather the register will remain open for a longer period. Very occasionally lateness is unavoidable. If you know you are going to be late please contact the office giving the reason for lateness.

19. The register is taken twice a day and is a legal requirement. Registers are monitored weekly. Where a pattern of lateness or absence is identified a letter will be sent outlining concerns and asking if there are any particular circumstances. If the situation does not improve parents may be called in to meet with the deputy head for inclusion.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

20. This policy will be monitored by the Governors and reviewed every 2 years