

Sir John Barrow School

Attendance Policy

Sir John Barrow School sets high standards for all its students; it provides opportunities for them to achieve their full potential and be the best they can be. We strive to see all our children succeed and be prepared for the next stage of their education and future life. We expect all members of the school to have tolerance, understanding and respect for all members of the community. We recognise that we will only achieve this aim by working together, in a partnership, with governors, students, parents/carers and with members of the wider community.

It is our belief that by attending school regularly children are able to take a full part in the opportunities provided. Children will only succeed in their education if they attend school regularly. Therefore, if it becomes necessary, we will take action to ensure that all children attending our school do so regularly. We work closely with our school Education Welfare Officer, with the Local Authority and with Children's Services to make sure that appropriate action regarding school attendance is taken at all times. Punctuality is also an important element of good school attendance; it is important for all our children to arrive in time for the beginning of lessons, as the initial input is essential to the whole objective.

The Governing Body expects from all pupils:

- That they will attend school regularly
- That they will arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the school day. This includes being appropriately dressed for all activities, including PE
- That they will inform their class teacher or the school secretary of any reason for late arrival at school.

The Governing Body expects from all parents/carers:

- That they fulfil their legal responsibilities and ensure their child/children attend school regularly.
- That they contact school as soon as is reasonably practicable, ideally by 9.30am, whenever their child is unable to attend. Parents/carers should inform the school via a phone call – the school has a dedicated answer-phone for recorded messages which can be used if a member of staff is not immediately available to speak with a parent/carer.
- That they ensure their children arrive well-prepared for the school day.
- That they contact the school in confidence whenever any problem arises that may keep their children away from school.
- That they commit to the Home/School agreement.
- Endeavour to keep health appointments out of school hours when possible.
- That they seek permission from school for any leave of absence and understand that the Head teacher is required to refuse to authorise any leave of absence except in exceptional circumstances.

Parents/carers and pupils can expect from the school:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact when a pupil is absent without explanation.
- Action on any attendance problem notified to the school.
- Referral of specific attendance issues to supporting agencies where appropriate.

We encourage good school attendance by

1. Consistent, clear communication with parents and pupils about the importance of regular, prompt, attendance.
2. Consistent implementation of Attendance Action Plans where attendance issues are identified and support is required.
3. Informing parent/carers of their child's attendance figure each term.
4. Setting targets for improved attendance and sharing these with Governors, parents and pupils.
5. The accurate completion of registers at the start of each session, and within 15 minutes of the start of each session.
6. Rewarding 100% attendance in a given school term = Certificate presented in assembly
7. Rewarding 100% attendance in a full year = Gold Certificate presented at the End of Year Assembly

The school responds to non-attendance by:

- Contacting parents on the first day of any absence if no reason has been received. (Contact will initially be by telephone).
- If there is no response to the first contact a second telephone call will be made, this will include the use of any additional contact numbers provided by parents; it may also involve referral to our Education Welfare Officer.
- If there is no response to the second contact, School will continue to attempt to make telephone contact.
- Where a pattern of non-attendance is emerging, the parent/carer is informed and support offered from school/governor's staff to help resolve the difficulties; this may involve agreeing an Attendance Action Plan with the school's Governor for Attendance, Head Teacher and Education Welfare Officer.
- Where there is no response to school intervention and where the absence or pattern of absence has persisted, the school will refer to the Local Authority Inclusion Team; this will be done through the Attendance Action Plan review process and will involve an Attendance Review Conference with the Local Authority Inclusion Officer.

As part of our Safeguarding procedures, non-attendance is always followed up by school.

Our school Education Welfare Officer is: Beth Todd

Leave of Absence During Term Time (Including Term Time Holidays)

The school acknowledges that from time to time some parents will want to take their children out of school for holidays. Schools are now required to refuse requests for holidays during term time. We advise that wherever possible, absence from school should be avoided as it can have a serious effect on a child's educational progress, and can create difficulties for them upon their return. It is important to note that only the Head teacher can authorise absence, of any description, from school. Parents/Guardians/Carers cannot authorise absence themselves.

An unauthorised absence from school is any absence that is deemed not to be an acceptable reason for missing school. Unauthorised absence from school can carry the risk of prosecution under section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996.

'Head teachers may grant leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances. If you believe that your circumstances are exceptional, you must discuss the matter with the Head teacher. Head teachers will not authorise absence unless they believe circumstances to be exceptional. Case law identifies that **any** holiday or event that can be arranged during school holiday periods should not be authorised during the school term'.

On occasions, requests may be received for an extended period of absence. It is expected that these occasions should be very exceptional and that the necessity for, and the timing and length of such leave will require careful consideration by school, families and pupils. Examples of very exceptional circumstances could include:

- A trip to visit extended family living abroad.
- The nature of the trip justifies allowing longer than two weeks in term time.

It is noted that there may be positive benefits for pupils both educationally and culturally to visit extended families living abroad. In all cases, it is best to have a discussion with the Head teacher in order to look at the issues as they affect your child.

The school responds to late attendance by:

- After 8.50am, children must enter school by the main entrance. This is for Safeguarding and security reasons and to help monitor late attendance.
- Parents and children will be asked to give a reason for late attendance
- After 5 lates, within a 12 week period, Mrs Jordan or Mrs Hudson, our School Administrators, will contact parents/carers in order to find out the reason for late attendance, where possible action will be agreed to improve the situation. School will endeavour to work with families to help prevent late attendance wherever possible.
- After 3 consecutive lates, or 10 lates, Miss Pemberton, Headteacher, will contact parents/carers in order to support parents/carers to improve their child's attendance. Where appropriate, the parent/carer will be invited to visit school to work with school staff to help resolve the difficulties.
- Where a consistent pattern of late attendance is emerging the parent/carer will also be contacted by the governors. The parent/carer will be invited to visit school to work with school staff/governors to help resolve the difficulties, agreeing pro-active actions.

Where there is no response to school intervention and there continues to be a pattern of late attendance the Head Teacher may refer to other support agencies.

Our Local Authority Inclusion Officer is: Nicky Braund Smith.

Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the class teacher to mark the attendance each morning and afternoon. Absences should be accurately recorded with the appropriate code. Children who are late but arrive before the registration period ends should be marked as an **L**. Those arriving after the registration period ends should be marked as a **U**.

Registration Periods

Morning 8.50am – 9.30am

Afternoon 1.10pm – 1.15pm

Class teachers should also inform the Head teacher when their class has 100% attendance for a complete week.

School administrators will follow up any absences after the registration period closes with a phone call and a letter and will mark in any child arriving at school after registration ends. The electronic registration system provides many reports and information that assist the school to monitor attendance. These reports will be accessed when relevant and provide information to assist the school strategically manage attendance issues.

Signed: H Pemberton

Date: March 2018

Reviewed by: Beth Todd, Educational Welfare Officer

Next Review Date: March 2019