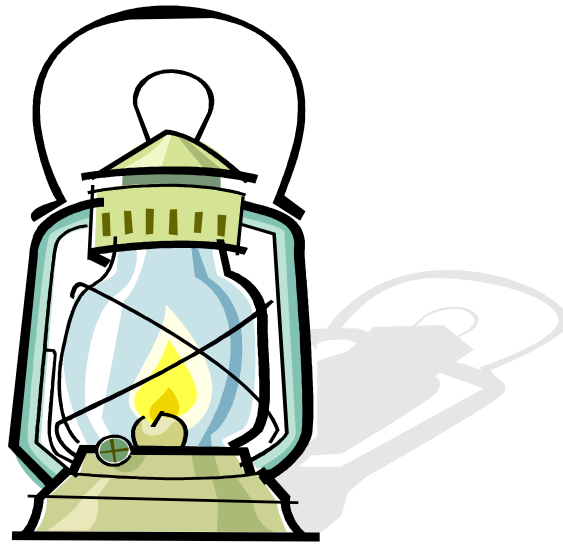




ATTENDANCE POLICY



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
SCHOOL PRACTICE.....	3
LATENESS.....	4
THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT.....	4
THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER.....	4
WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP.....	5
GOVERNORS.....	5
APPENDIX 1.....	6
GOOD TIMEKEEPING REMINDER LETTER.....	6
APPENDIX 2.....	7
LETTER REGARDING UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE.....	7

Introduction

Good attendance at school is important for a pupils' education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life. It is essential that the school is informed of the reasons for absence on the first day of absence. Under current government legislation, unauthorised absence is regarded as truancy and all absence figures have to be reported to the Local Authority (LA), the Government Department for Education, as well as to the schools Governing Body. Attendances are also recorded on a pupils' annual school report. It is important that pupils arrive on time for school, as a prompt start to the day establishes the learning activities for the day. Parents/guardians must ensure that they have read the School's attendance policy in respect of authorised absence and unauthorised absences as poor attendance has a detrimental effect on a pupil's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and parents/guardians, pupils and teachers all have their part to play in ensuring this happens.

Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire duration of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absences:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the headteacher (or her nominated representative) approves a pupils' absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the headteacher (or her nominated representative) will not approve, for example a family holiday during term time.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of parents/guardians, St Bede's Primary and Nursery School, its Governing Body and the LA.

There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. As attendance deteriorates, so does performance and achievement.

School Practice

The school follows the Government circulars and Borough Guidelines on attendance.

Registers are completed on-line using Integris G2 at 9am and 1pm.

Daily attendance/absence marks are checked by the Clerical Administrator on G2 attendance modules.

Parents/guardians should always telephone the school office (extension 1) if their child will not be attending school. First day calls are made by the Clerical Administrator if the school has been given no prior notification of a pupil's absence.

Every absence by a pupil is checked. It is then rigorously followed up in the classroom by the Learning Assistant and a written explanation is always required after every absence. The letters are kept in a labelled plastic wallet and given to the school office to file at the end of the academic year.

At the end of each week the Learning Assistant checks absences and any, which are found to be without explanation are investigated usually by sending out a "regarding unexplained absence" letter (see appendix 2) asking the parent/guardian to give details of the absence.

Staff should bring to the attention of the headteacher those pupils who are seen to be developing a pattern of absence. The Education Welfare Officer also inspects the registers on-line on a fortnightly basis and monitors absence patterns.

Parents/guardians are asked, on occasions, to visit the school to discuss absence. Usually this happens prior to the problem being brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer.

No holiday during school time will be allowed to comply with Borough Attendance Strategy. In exceptional circumstances, individual circumstances will be negotiated. The overall attendance pattern of the pupil will also be taken into account when deciding whether to grant extended leave.

Pupils learn best when:

- They arrive punctually at school.
- Absence and lateness are monitored and action taken when necessary.

- Parents/guardians and staff work in partnership to maximise pupils' attendance at school and everyone is clear about the procedures.

If a pupil is going to be absent from school for a long period of time and unable to attend school at all (e.g. due to a broken leg or similar circumstances), a referral for home tuition can be made via the borough of residence. Please contact the school office in these circumstances.

Lateness

The school day begins at 9am and all pupils are expected to be in school at this time. Registers open at 9.00am and close at 9.30 am. A pupil receives a late mark if they are not in their classroom by the time the class register is taken at 9.00 am, unless prior notice is given, for example, a doctor's appointment. In that situation the pupil is given a treatment mark. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make dental/doctors appointments outside school hours.

Any pupil arriving later than 9.00 a.m. should enter the school via the main entrance and report to the School Office. The parent or guardian should give a reason for the lateness. A member of the office staff will then send the junior pupil to their classroom and a member of the office staff will escort the infant pupil to their classroom. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of the other pupils. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken.

Lateness is considered to be an equally serious absence. Parents/guardians of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness are reminded about the importance of good time-keeping by sending a "good timekeeping reminder" letter (see Appendix 1). Parents/guardians will be asked to visit school to discuss the problem if they have three or more lates in a half-term.

At the end of each week classes with the best attendance and least number of lates are applauded in the weekly school newsletter.

The Role of the School Management

Pupils learn best when parents and staff work in partnership to maximise pupils' attendance at school and everyone is clear about the procedures.

1. The school staff has an obligation to enquire about the reasons for pupils' absences and/or lateness and do insist upon written evidence for any such occurrences.
2. There is, likewise, an equally important task for the staff to report concerns over absence and lateness to the Headteacher.
3. The school sends out letters to ascertain reasons why pupils are absent or late (see appendix 1 and appendix 2).
4. The school collects information daily and weekly from the registers on authorised and unauthorised absence and enters this information on a yearly return.
5. The School Prospectus emphasises to parents the importance of full attendance for a satisfactory delivery of the National Curriculum to each pupil and for testing procedures.
6. At every new intake meeting for parents held in July the Education Welfare Officer when possible speaks about the law and the school routines and helps parents to become familiar with the role.
7. At the end of each school year, attendance figures for every individual pupil are put on the end of year report along with the number of unauthorised absences for that year, hence, parents are made fully aware of their responsibilities and know that the school is keeping a long term record.

The Role of the Education Welfare Officer

1. To make a regular visit to the school to check on absence, lateness and any perceived problem raised by the school. The Education Welfare Service also has statutory responsibility under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.

2. To check all class attendance, on line, frequently.
3. To follow up with a letter, telephone call or home visit in cases where attendance or lateness is habitual, after pre-referral action by the school.
4. To report back to the school the outcome of their investigations.
5. To work in partnership with the school and with parents.

We strive to encourage a team effort from staff, parents, pupils and the Educational Welfare Officer so that pupils appreciate the importance of their own regular attendance and punctuality.

What Parents can do to help

Parents must ensure that they know the rules about the schools attendance policy in respect of authorised absence and unauthorised absences as this has a huge impact on a pupils' learning if it is not managed.

Parents must:

- Let the school know as soon as possible why their child is away.
- Send a written note when their child returns to school.
- Try to make appointments for their child outside school time.
- Not allow their child to have time off school unless it is really necessary or with the prior agreement of the Headteacher.

If parents/guardians are worried about their child's attendance at school they should:

- Talk to their child; it may be something simple that needs resolving.
- Talk to their child's class teacher.

Absence from school is taken seriously and reasons for absences are followed up.

If absences continue, then the school may refer to the Education Welfare Service.

Governors

The percentage attendance and unauthorised/authorised absences are presented to the Governing Body on a termly basis.

GOOD TIMEKEEPING REMINDER LETTER

Date:

Dear Family,

I note from the class register that is frequently late.

May I remind you that school begins at 9.00 am promptly each day and pupils should make their way to their classroom from 8.50 am. Please ensure your child arrives on time as it can be very disruptive to their own education and that of the whole class.

Please sign the slip below to acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Nott
Headteacher

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO THE CLASS TEACHER

Pupils Name.....Class.....

I acknowledge receipt of your letter regarding my child’s punctuality and will ensure he/she arrives on time for each school session in future.

Signed.....Parent

LETTER REGARDING UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE

Date:

Dear Family,

Your child did not attend school on the following day/s.....

The Education Welfare Officer inspects the school registers weekly and, at present, your child's absence is recorded as unauthorised.

It is important that your child's class teacher receives a written explanation regarding the above absence.

Please complete and return the slip below as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Nott
Headteacher

TO BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED TO THE CLASS TEACHER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Pupil's Name.....Class.....

Date/s of absence.....

Reason for absence.....

.....

Signed.....Date.....