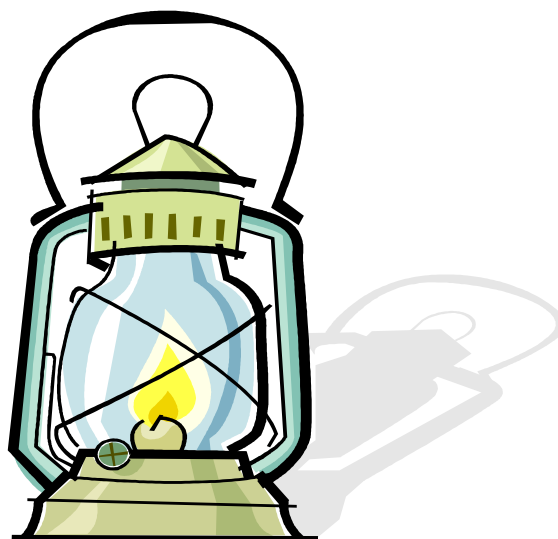





# *ATTENDANCE POLICY*



*“Shine like a lantern in the presence of the Lord.”*

Approved by:	Head Teacher	Date: 04 – 09 – 2023
Signed		
Last reviewed on:	Autumn 2023	
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## 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 Department for Education (DfE), as well as to the schools Governing Body. Attendances are also recorded on a pupils' annual school report. It is also important that pupils arrive on time for school, as a prompt start to the day establishes the learning activities for the day.

Parents/Carers must ensure that they have read the School's Attendance Policy in respect of authorised and unauthorised absences as poor attendance has a detrimental effect on a pupil's learning. Regular school attendance is essential and Parents/Carers, 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 absence:

- **Authorised Absence:** is when the headteacher (or his nominated representative) approves a pupils' absence.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** is when the headteacher (or his nominated representative) will not approve, for example a family holiday during term time unless there are truly exceptional circumstances or if a letter is not forthcoming from the family regarding a period of absence.

The achievement and maintenance of high levels of attendance is the shared responsibility of Parents/Carers, St Bede's Catholic Primary School and Nursery, 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 using online registers on the School's Pupil Information System (currentlyIntegris G2) at 9am and 1pm.Attendance/absence marks are checked twice daily by the Office Staff.

Parents/Carers should always telephone the school office as soon as possible if their child will not be attending school and in any event no later than 9.30am. Calls are made to the parents/carers by the Office Staff on the first day of absence if the school has been given no prior notification. Vulnerable children are a priority.

Every absence of a pupil is checked. It is then rigorously followed up in the classroom by the Learning Assistant for a written explanation of the absence. In the case of medical appointments a copy of the appointment card or letter is sufficient for this purpose and these should be sent into school prior to the appointment taking place. The letters are kept in a labelled plastic wallet and filed 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 1 ) 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 or lateness. The Education Welfare Officer visits the school on a regular basis inspecting the registers and monitoring absence patterns.

Parents/Carers may be asked, on occasions, to visit the school to discuss absence or lateness. Usually this happens prior to any issue being brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer.

Holiday during school time will not be allowed; this complies with the Borough Attendance Strategy. In exceptional cases, individual circumstances may be negotiated.

Pupils learn best when:

- They arrive punctually at school.
- Absence and lateness are monitored and follow up action taken when necessary.
- Parents/Carers 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 medical problem/condition or similar circumstances), a referral for home tuition can be made via the borough where the family lives. Please contact the school office in these circumstances to request that these arrangements are made.

### **LATENESS**

The school day begins at 8.50am for 9am registration in class 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. Parents/Carers 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 pedestrian entrance in Canon Avenue and report to the School Office. The parent or carer should give a reason for the lateness. A member of the office staff will then send junior pupils to class and escort any infant pupils to their class. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of other pupils in their class. Where persistent lateness gives cause for concern further action may be taken. The Education Welfare Officer will carry out spot checks from time to time of children arriving late to school and speak directly with the parent/carers in such cases.

Lateness is considered to be as equally serious as absence. Parents/Carers of pupils who seem to be developing patterns of lateness are reminded about the importance of good time-keeping by the sending of a "good timekeeping reminder" letter (see Appendix 2). Parents/Carers will be asked to visit school to discuss the situation if they have three or more lates in a half-term.

### **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. School staff have an obligation to enquire about the reasons for pupils' absences and/or lateness and will 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 appendices 1 and 2).
4. The school collects and monitors information daily and weekly from the registers on authorised and unauthorised absence; this is also monitored by the LA's Education Welfare Officer.
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 Nursery and Reception parents held in July each year the Education Welfare Officer will speak about the legal requirements of attendance at school and the school routines.
7. At the end of each school year, attendance figures of every pupil are included in the end of year report along with the number of unauthorised absences for that year. Parents are

thereby made fully aware of their responsibilities and know that the school is keeping a long term record.

Parents can be fined for a poor record of attendance or lateness.

### **THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER**

1. To make regular visits to the school to check on absences, lateness and any perceived problems raised by the school. The Education Welfare Service also has statutory responsibilities under the Education Act 1996 to pursue non-school attendance and persistent lateness.
2. To check all school attendance on a regular basis.
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/carers.

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 school attendance in respect of authorised 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 (preferably by 9.30am) why their child is absent.
- Send a written note in all cases when their child returns to school (this can be a copy of an appointment card/letter).
- Try to make appointments for their child outside school time.
- Not allow their child to have time off school unless it is absolutely necessary or with the prior agreement of the Headteacher.

If Parents/Carers 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 the case to the Education Welfare Service.

### **GOVERNORS**

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

Additional documents available on the Policies section of the website (under Attendance Policy).

LETTER REGARDING UNEXPLAINED ABSENCE

Dear Family

Dear Family

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

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

Any absences due to official appointments e.g. doctor, dentist, hospital etc must be evidenced with an appointment card or copy of letter/email from the relevant organisation.

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

GARY NOTT  
Headteacher

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**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 .....

GOOD TIMEKEEPING REMINDER LETTER

Date: .....

To the Family of: .....

Dear Family

I note from the class register that your child is frequently late.

May I remind you that pupils should aim to arrive at school at 8.50am for a prompt registration at 9.00am in class each day. Please ensure your child arrives on time as it can be very disruptive to their own education and that of the whole class.

Yours sincerely

Gary Nott

GARY NOTT

Headteacher

AUTHORISED ABSENCE LETTER

Date

Name

Address

Dear .....

Further to your letter dated ....., I write to confirm that due to the circumstances you refer to, the leave of absence ..... from ..... to ..... will be authorised on this occasion.

No further leave will be authorised this academic year.

Yours sincerely

Gary Nott  
HEADTEACHER



## UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE LETTER

DATE

Dear .....

Further to your letter with regards your request to take ..... out of school. I write to inform you that I cannot authorise this leave on .....

Pupils attend school for a maximum 190 days each academic year. Full attendance is vital for your child's educational progress. The school regards absence as a very serious concern and it is a proven fact there is a clear link between poor attendance at school and lower academic achievement (department for Education (DfE), 2012).

The DfE (2013) state that leave of absence requests for holidays should not be granted. The school will only grant leave in term time in the most exceptional circumstances for which evidence will be requested. Leave taken without the permission of the Head teacher will be recorded as unauthorised and you may be liable to a Penalty Notice fine of £120.00 per parent, per child (£60.00 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days). The fines will be issued by Redbridge Education Welfare service.

Your child may be removed from the school roll if they are absent for an extended period.

With every good wish.

Gary Nott  
Headteacher

## ATTENDANCE INFORMATION NOTE FOR TEACHERS

LATES	CODE	CODE	CODE	
9.00 – 9.30	L	9.31 +	U	
<p>Children are able to arrive at school from 8.30am when a staff member will be on duty on the playground to greet them. Children can then make their way into the classroom from 8.50am. The register will be called at 9.00am. Children who arrive after this time will be recorded as late as above. Please note Code U is used for those Late after registers have closed and recorded as Unauthorised lateness.</p> <p>2 Lates within half term Appendix 2 to be sent to parent</p> <p>3 Lates Appointment to be made with family to discuss lates, staff member to complete CPOMs</p> <p>4 + Lates referral to EWO</p> <p>Nursery commences at 9.00am and finishes at 12.00 for morning children and 12.30pm to 3.30pm for afternoon children.</p> <p>Please note that the school day finishes at 3.15pm for Infants and 3.20pm for Juniors. It is as important that children are collected at the end of the school day on time. A record is kept in the school office of those children collected late. Families will be invited in if a pattern of lateness emerges.</p>				
<p><b>ATTENDANCE</b></p> <p>First day of absence, family to call school 02085901376 extn 1 to inform the school of reason for absence.</p> <p>On return to school family to provide written explanation for absence. If no letter is forthcoming from the family Appendix 1 will be sent to family, if no return of Appendix 1 the following day the absence will be recorded with the O code until such time a letter is forthcoming from the family. If a family have a reason they feel warrants their child missing school this must be put in writing to the Head prior to the date of absence giving full details for the reason for the forthcoming absence. The Head will then respond accordingly and advise if the request for leave is authorised or unauthorised. (Appendix 3/4). Pending on the circumstances of leave requested will determine the Code used.</p> <p>Penalty Notices may be considered for leave of absence taken without the permission of the Head teacher which will result in £120.00 fine per parent, per child (reducing to £60.00 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days) or . The fines will be issued by Redbridge Education Welfare Services.</p> <p>Your child may be removed from the school roll if they are absent for an extended period.</p> <p>Parents can assist in their child's attendance by making appointments for their child outside school time where possible. Where this is not possible, parents are requested to provide a copy of the medical appointment letter or other form of letter from the organisation that has made the appointment prior to the said date of absence. The code M will be used for the date of the am/pm appointment (if the child needs to attend the dentist, optician, doctors). If a child is required to be absent for more than 1 day due to an operation the code I will be used for subsequent days. It is unusual for a child to be absent for the whole day for a medical appointment (unless an operation). Authorisation will be required for whole day absences due to appointments.</p> <p>For any other reason please liaise with the office for coding.</p>				