



Barcombe Hamsey Plumpton Skylark Federation

**Reviewed and approved by FGB: January 2018
Next review: January 2019**

SignedChair of Governors Date

Signed Executive Headteacher Date

ATTENDANCE POLICY

This policy reflects the vision and aims of Barcombe CE Primary School by

- _ Encouraging staff, parents and children to maximise the learning experience in order that all children reach their full potential.
- _ Providing clear procedures for involving parents relating to school attendance.

Principles

Regular and punctual attendance is of paramount importance in ensuring that all children have full access to the curriculum. Valuable learning time is lost when children are absent or late. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by the parent.

Children are sometimes reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child.

If a child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and may make things worse.

Every half-day absence has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of each absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a reason such as genuine illness or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given.

This includes:

- _ parents keeping children off school unnecessarily
- _ truancy before or during the school day
- _ absences which have never been properly explained
- _ children who arrive at school too late to get a mark

Barcombe CE Primary School Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) from the Local Education Authority. The EWO will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed, these Officers can use court proceedings to prosecute parents or to seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment.

Procedures

The school applies the following procedures in deciding how to deal with individual absences:

It is not usually appropriate for the school to authorise absences for shopping, looking after other children, day trips etc. Leave may, however, be granted in an emergency (e.g. bereavement) or for medical appointments which must be in school time.

The Governing Body of Barcombe CE School have made the decision that any unauthorised absence which is eligible for a Local Authority Penalty Notice (that is absences of 5 days or more in one go) will now be referred to the Local Authority for the penalty notice to be issued.

Summary

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance. Equally, parents have a duty to make sure that their children attend.

School staff are committed to working with parents as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

Parents are asked to telephone the school before 8.45am on the first day of an absence and on any subsequent days. It may be that parents are bringing a sibling to school and they then tell us in person. A telephone call is made home on the first morning of an absence if we have not heard from the parents.

It is clearly communicated to parents through newsletters that we have a zero tolerance policy to authorising holiday in term time. This statement is also available in our parents' handbook and in our new starters pack; it is reinforced in our home school agreement.

The policy for lateness is communicated to parents in the same way. Our register closes at 9.10am.