**Bourton on the Water Primary Academy**

**SCHOOL ATTENDANCE POLICY**

At Bourton on the Water Primary Academy it is recognised that the responsibility for promoting good attendance and punctuality is shared by all staff, governors, parents and carers and the pupils. As a school we aim to work with pupils and parents/carers to remove any barriers to attendance by building strong and trusting relationships. We promote the need to work together to monitor attendance and endeavour to put the correct support in place.

This policy should be applied fairly and consistently, but in doing so we will always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. This may include pupils with SEND, medical conditions or a social worker.

**Good attendance is important because:**

* Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement at KS2 and KS4 and poor attendance.
* The overall absence rate of pupils not achieving grades 9-4 at GSCE Maths and English is over twice as high as those achieving the grades.
* Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically.
* Regular attendance is an important protective factor. Research has shown links between regular absence and extra familiar harms and vulnerabilities such as crime (including knife crime)

**The Law**

The law says that:

* Every child of compulsory school age is entitled to an efficient, full time education.
* Parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that their children receive suitable full-time education;
* That Local Authorities must ensure that parents fulfil their legal obligations regarding their children’s education;
* Maintained schools must allow the LA to inspect their register
* Schools must report to the LA pupils who fail to attend regularly. Gloucestershire’s Penalty Notice protocol allows schools to notify the LA of any pupil having more than 5 days (10 sessions) of unauthorised absence in a ten-week period particularly when this absence is on account of:

(a) Lateness after registration;

(b) Unauthorised holiday

In these instances, the LA will consider issuing a fixed penalty notice of £60 after a warning has been issued by the school. Unauthorised absence may lead to the LA taking full court action if attendance issues cannot be resolved.

**Parental responsibility**

**Parents/carers should:**

* Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies.
* Advise school of any planned absence via email to [attendance@bourton.school](mailto:attendance@bourton.school) or phone 01451 820458
* Contact school on the first morning of every unexpected absence (e.g. illness) to state the reason for the absence and the date your child is expected to return to school.
* Keep school updated by telephone or email if your child has an extended period of absence due to illness.
* Make sure your child attends school regularly and on time, appropriately dressed and equipped and in a fit state to learn.
* Let the school know immediately if they are having difficulty with attendance so that any available help or support can be offered.
* Arrange medical and dental appointments out of school hours, or during school breaks.
* Understand that there is no entitlement for parents to take pupils on holiday during term time and that holidays in school term will be unauthorised.

**School responsibility**

**The school will:**

* **Expect** high standards of attendance from all pupils and build a culture all can, and want to, be in school ready to learn. Have a clear attendance policy. Remind parents/carers of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality in newsletters and on the school website.
* **Monitor** patterns of poor attendance (individual and cohort level) Keep and mark registers accurately. Acknowledge and reward good attendance. Publish a child’s attendance rate on his/her annual school report. Follow up unexplained absences with phone calls as soon as possible. Let parents know if we have concerns regarding your child’s attendance and offer support and advice.
* **Listen and understand** pupils and parent/carers in order to remove barriers to attendance. Build strong relationships with families and work with and support them.
* **Facilitate support**. This may be in terms of using our Parent Support Advisor or Nurture Interventions for example.
* **Formalise support** if absence persists. This may include a parental contract or education supervision order.
* **Enforce** attendance through statutory interventions when all other avenues of support have not been successful. A referral will be made to our Attendance Support Officer (ASO) who will consult with the Local Authority’s Education Entitlement and Inclusion team who will consider taking legal action under the s444(1) of the Education Act 1996.

**The Co-Head Teachers will:**

* Have overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance. Ensure that everybody at school treats attendance as a priority.
* Promote the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers.
* Be available to discuss attendance concerns with pupils, parents, staff and governors. They can be contacted via email [cohead@bourton.school](mailto:cohead@bourton.school).
* Analyse attendance data and report this to Governors
* Oversee attendance procedures.

**The Governors will:**

* Take and active role in attendance improvement, support the co-headteachers to prioritise attendance and set whole school cultures.
* Ensure co-headteachers fulfil expectations and statutory duties.

**Current School Times**

Gates are opened at 8.45am. We expect children to be at school by 8.55am.

Morning Registration closes at 9.15. Afternoon Registration either 1pm or 1.15pm depending the KS1.

Lunchtime is 12.00-1.00pm FS/KS1, 12.30-1.15pm- KS2

School finishes at 3.00pm

Children should be collected promptly unless they are attending an after-school activity.

In the unlikely event that a child is not collected at the end of the school day and we cannot contact parents/carers or emergency contacts, the appropriate authorities will be contacted. For this reason, it is IMPERATIVE that we have at least two emergency contacts.

**Registration**

School must keep attendance registers for all pupils on the school roll. The class teacher will call the register twice a day and every pupil will be marked as present, absent or engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site. It must be shown, by the use of approved codes, whether an absence is authorised or not.

* Morning registration is at 8.55am when we expect all pupils to be in class
* Afternoon registration is taken as soon as the pupils return to their classes after lunch.
* Registration will close 20 minutes after the register has been taken (9.15am). A pupil arriving within this time will be marked with an **L**, unless there is an acceptable reason for the lateness.

**School Procedures After Registration**

* After close of registration registers are checked by office staff.
* Where the register shows an unexplained absence and there has been no message received at school, contact will be made to the parent/carer to find out the reason for absence and the date of expected return.
* If school have been unable to make contact after the 10th day of absence the head teacher will report the pupil as a ‘Child Missing Education’ to the Local Authority who will enforce their missing Child Missing Education protocol.
* Where the register shows a pattern of late during or after registration. School will work with the family to address the reasons for the lateness.
* Where the problem persists after support is offered, the Local Authority may issue a fixed penalty notice. A written warning of this will usually be issued, in the first instance, by the school.
* Any concerns about attendance or punctuality will be referred to the Co Head teachers who will, if necessary, contact parents/carers to try to resolve any issues and if appropriate refer to the parent Support Advisor or the Attendance Support Officer. If these issues cannot be resolved and there continues to be unauthorised absence the matter may be referred ultimately to the Education Entitlement and Exclusion Team at Shire Hall.

**Absences**

Absence, legally, has to be recorded as either authorised or unauthorised and reported on to the DfE and in some circumstances to the LA. Only the Co Headteachers can decide whether an absence is authorised or not in line with school policy and **does not** have to accept the reasons given by a parent or carer.

Authorised Absence is when a pupil:

* Is absent with the prior permission of the school;
* Is too unwell to attend school or is attending a medical or dental appointment;
* Is away for a day set aside by their parent’s religion for religious observance
* Has suffered a family bereavement;
* Has been excluded
* Of Traveller parents
* Parent is travelling in connection with their work.

Unauthorised absence is when:

* A pupil is absent and no explanation or an unacceptable explanation is offered;
* A pupil arrives after the registration period has closed without an acceptable reason;
* A pupil is away from school on a family holiday.

Amendments to the **Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006** remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten school days. The amendments make clear that head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There is no entitlement to time off in term time and school can issue a Fixed Penalty Notice if absence is recorded as an unauthorised holiday. A written warning of this will usually be issued, in the first instance, by the school.

An approved educational activity is not recorded as an absence and will be marked when a pupil is on a school/educational visit, is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving specific off-site tuition.

Attendance letters will be sent out each term, These will be sent to pupils at risk of becoming persistently absent (attendance rate of 93-90%) and persistent absentees (attendance rate less than 90%)

**If a pupil is at risk of becoming persistently absent (less than 90% attendance)** parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to help them understand the barriers to attendance. They are expected to proactively engage with the support offered to prevent the need for more formal support. School will work with the families to understand and address reasons for absence.

**If a pupil is persitently absent** parents are expected to work with the school and local authority to help them understand the barriers to attendance. They are expected to proactively engage with the support offered including a parenting contract or voluntary early help plan to prevent the need for legal intervention. School will work with the families to understand and address reasons for absence and use targeted support to remove any barriers.

If there is a lack of engagement, hold more formal conversations about the potential need for legal intervention in the future.

A joint approach for **severely absent** pupils will include support from external agencies such as the local authority advisory teaching service or inclusion team.

**Strategies**

To support our attendance policy, we will:

* Treat attendance as a priority;
* Apply timely intervention/support and where necessary, if poor attendance continues, refer to the local authority’s Education, Entitlement and Inclusion team to consider who will legal sanctions
* Promote good attendance at every opportunity –at Parents’ evenings, at induction, in newsletters, in assemblies etc;
* Always use first day contact;
* Reward and celebrate good and improved attendance;
* Set attendance targets for the school;
* Keep parents/carers informed of their child’s attendance level;
* Make good use of attendance data by specific analysis;
* Notify Governors at each full governing body meeting in the Co Head’s report of attendance levels;
* Provide a safe, happy, stimulating environment for children where they feel valued and welcomed and that their presence in school is important.

**Success Criteria**

* We are meeting or exceeding our attendance targets.
* Our attendance is in line with, or exceeds that of local comparator schools.
* We have positive feedback from outside agencies such as Ofsted, LA etc
* Everybody is clear about what to do if a child is absent from school.

***Written by Co Headteachers Mrs Lindsay Connor and Mr John Jones***

***Agreed September 2022 by The Full Governing Body***

***To be reviewed September 2023***