Bishop Monkton CE Primary School

Attendance and Absence Policy

(including Children Missing Education)

Attendance Information for Parents

New DFE national statutory attendance guidance for schools came into force in August 2024: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance

The guidance expects schools to promote good attendance and work with families to ensure that children attend school on time, and regularly but includes new guidance on new thresholds for Penalty Notice Fines for parents taking children out of school for unauthorised absences. The overall aim of these changes, issued by the Department for Education, is to improve attendance, and is statutory in primary and secondary schools. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have.
It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education.

Parents are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends every day the school is open except when a statutory reason applies
- Notify the school as soon as possible when their child has been unexpectedly absent (e.g. sickness)
- Only request leave of absence in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance
- Book any medical appointments around the school day, where possible

Arriving after the Register Closes

The school day begins at 8.55am, when the bell rings and children walk in to class and the register is taken. Registration closes at 9.05 am. Pupils arriving after registration closes are classed as late and is an **unauthorised absence**. This counts towards the 10 session threshold for issue of a penalty notice. Lunchtime registration is at 1.00pm and closes at 1.05pm.

Persistent Absence

Attendance of **less than 90%** (equivalent to 1 day or more a fortnight, across a full school year).

Severely Absent Pupils

Pupils who are absent from school more than they are present (missing 50% or more of school)

School monitors pupil attendance and punctuality closely. In the first instance, school will aim to work with the family to address concerns about attendance. Where there are concerns about pupil attendance, or the data meets given **thresholds**, school works with families to address any possible barriers. Any measures implemented by schools are considered on an individual basis, dependent on individual circumstances and support is tailored to the needs of the individual parent and family. This is usually a 'support first' approach with schools working together with families, local authorities and wider partners where barriers to attendance go beyond the school gates and cover multiple needs. e.g. working with outside agencies such as Early Help or family support, Social Care, the Local Authority etc.

National Threshold

The national threshold for consideration of issue of a penalty notice is 10 sessions within any 10 week period (this period of 10 school weeks can span different terms or school years - e.g. 2 sessions of unauthorised absence in the Summer Term and a further 8 within the Autumn Term).

Examples:

- 4 sessions of holiday taken in term time plus 6 sessions of arriving after the register closes, in a 10 week period
- 10 sessions of holiday in one week (this equals 5 days of missed school)
- 6 sessions of unauthorised absence taken in 1 week, and 1 per week for the next 4 weeks

Please note a school day is counted as 2 sessions –
one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Penalty Notice fines will be considered when there have been 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.

Penalty Notices

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices, the following changes will come into force for Penalty Notices issued after 19th August 2024.

Per Parent, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines will now be issued to **each** parent, for **each** child that was absent.
E.g. 3 siblings absent for term-time leave would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.
Penalty notices are paid to the Local Authority – and used to support the administration of this system.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for term-time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be:
£160 per parent, per child, paid within 28 days (reduced to £80 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days).

Second Offence

The second time a Penalty Notice is issued for term-time leave or irregular attendance, the amount will be £160 per parent. Per child, paid within 28 days.

Third Offence and any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed for term-time leave or Irregular Attendance, a Penalty Notice will not be issued – the case will be considered for prosecution.

The following are **not** considered exceptional circumstances:

- Holidays during term-time
- The child has good or 100% attendance