



## **Boulevard Primary Partnership - Attendance Policy**

### **1 The Boulevard Primary Partnership:**

- Treats attendance as a priority within each whole school community
- Uses robust systems for monitoring attendance
- Uses data and other information to improve school and pupil performance
- Promotes the importance of good attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- Intervenes early when individual pupil's absence gives cause for concern
- Has support systems in place for vulnerable pupils
- Praises and celebrates good and improved attendance as appropriate
- Makes use of additional support for pupils and parents with the greatest need

### **2 BPP Principles**

Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents and teachers share the responsibility for ensuring that attendance rates at Downs Barn and Southwood Schools are maximised and that rates of unjustified and unauthorised absenteeism are kept to a minimum.

### **3 BPP Aims:**

- To ensure as far as possible that the 'safeguarding' of children is a priority
- To encourage a positive approach to school attendance
- To challenge and reduce levels of authorised and unauthorised absences
- To promote a consistent approach by all staff
- To recognise and praise good attendance
- To acknowledge the link between attendance and attainment and ensure parents understand this
- To acknowledge the significance of attendance to vulnerable groups (FSM/SEN)

### **4 BPP Ethos**

- The BPP wishes to build on its belief in equal value and determined optimism
- The BPP recognises that punctual and regular attendance alongside high standards of behaviour is an essential prerequisite to effective learning and is therefore committed to improving levels of attendance, punctuality and positive behaviour for all.
- The BPP will strive to work with all parents and pupils to optimise their success and remove any barriers to their learning and progress. The BPP is determined to ensure everyone has an equal chance to achieve and to develop this capacity for success.
- The BPP actively promotes a teaching and learning ethos which encourages all pupils to attend whatever their level of ability or need.
- In accordance with other BPP policies, members of the school community should be able to be respected, to act responsibly, to reflect and to be resilient.

## 5 Working in Partnership

- Parents are responsible in law for ensuring the regular and punctual attendance of their children as stated in the Home/School Agreement
- The BPP will encourage and value high attendance rates
- The BPP will recognise the external factors which influence student attendance and will work in partnership with parents, the local authority and other relevant services to deal with any issues
- The BPP will take a proactive approach to the promotion of good attendance by defining expectations with pupils and their parents and will provide an effective and efficient system for monitoring attendance in accordance with legal requirements

## 6 Roles and Responsibilities

There are a series of key procedures and actions that involve all staff at different levels. Key procedures are outlined below and are subject to change in line with strategy and need.

### 6.1 The Headteacher/ Head of school has overall responsibility for whole school attendance by:

- Ensuring that whole school attendance policy is implemented (and regularly reviewed)
- Ensuring that the policy is communicated to pupils, staff, parents and the Governing Board
- Set annual attendance targets
- Report to the Governing Board on attendance matters
- Hold weekly monitoring meetings with the LAB to review attendance, punctuality and processes and strategy
- Monitor punctuality and lateness on a daily basis
- Action warning letters/phone calls/home visits as required
- Authorising absences, after parent/carer interview, depending on circumstances

### 6.2 The LAB staff has an overall view of attendance across the school and is responsible for the day to day interventions with regard to pupil attendance.

The LAB role is to:

- Ensure each class attendance data is collected daily and used to inform strategic planning and action on attendance matters
- Update and maintain registers each day
- Process all notes and communication on absence and disseminate where appropriate
- Ensure absence query calls are promptly made to ascertain absence or lateness
- Alert class teacher when a register is incomplete/not completed for remedial action
- Liaise with class teachers in addressing pupil attendance concerns
- Liaise and inform the Headteacher /Head of School of any concerns
- Communicate with parents via letter and recorded telephone conversations on matters arising over attendance concerns
- Organise Attendance Panels with senior leaders as required
- Ensure interventions are recorded for evidence
- Provide additional administrative support to Headteacher/Head of School as required
- Conduct home visits if a child is absent without reason and the parent/carer is not contactable

- Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately of any Safeguarding concerns

**6.3 Senior leaders** are responsible for having an overview of attendance within the schools. They should:

- Have a secure overview and understanding of attendance matters
- Ensure that the importance of attendance is raised at appropriate meetings
- Praise excellent attendance and promote good attendance
- Support strategies to improve attendance
- Have a direct involvement in addressing concerns over Persistent Absence
- Be a key member of Attendance Panels in sanctioning Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)
- Support class teachers who do not meet policy expectations

**6.4 Class teachers:** At Downs Barn and Southwood the class teacher is seen as the key figure in promoting regular punctual attendance. The class teacher should:

- Provide a good example by always being responsible for registration and being punctual
- Carry out registration in the prescribed manner
- Ensure that pupils who are late are recorded correctly
- Ensure that all notes from parents regarding absences are scrutinised and recorded on the System and the LAB is informed
- Monitor patterns of absence for individuals within their class.
- Alert the LAB when there is an attendance problem
- Offer praise to individual students whose attendance and/or punctuality is good or improves
- Keep their registers accurate

**6.5 Governing Board**

- The Resources Committee of the Governing Board will monitor and review each school's attendance figures.

**6.6 Parent/Carer**

- Has a responsibility to ensure their child arrives at school punctually each day
- Has a responsibility to notify the school, on the morning of absence, before 9:00, with an acceptable reason, if their child is unable to attend school
- Work with the school to ensure their child has the highest possible attendance rate
- Endeavour to arrange appointments in school holidays or after school time

**7 Statement of Intent**

In order to improve levels of attendance and punctuality the BPP will employ key strategies:

- Ensure that all telephone communications from parents/carers about non-attendance are formally recorded for evidence purposes
- To address non-attendance strategically through 'first day absence' contact using an Absence Call
- The LAB and head teacher/head of school will analyse attendance data to assess patterns of absence and lateness. Once patterns have been established contact will be made with the parents/carers to organise a meeting to discuss concerns
- Follow a stepped approach using clear supportive strategies to address levels of attendance below 96%

- Produce Persistent Absentee data and seek strategies to regularly address this area of concern
- Refuse to authorise regular non-attendance where patterns of sporadic illness occur. Absence will only be authorised by way of a medical note from the family GP
- Follow Milton Keynes Council Enforcement Policy in relation to school attendance

## **8 Registration**

The register is a legal document, which could be used as evidence in cases where parents are being prosecuted for school attendance offences. It is of vital importance that all registers are completed punctually and accurately by class teachers during registration. Particular attention to accuracy is vital.

## **9 Lateness**

When a pupil arrives late to school they are signed in at Reception- the time of arrival and reason for lateness is recorded.

Serious or persistent lateness will be addressed by firstly discussing with parent/ carer the reasons and establishing a strategy for improvement.

## **10 Family Holidays, Extended Trips During Term Time**

The Department for Education states that no term time holidays are granted and therefore, as a rule, requests for term time leave will not be approved unless there are special circumstances. Any absence where it is believed a holiday has been taken during term time will be marked as unauthorised in the Register. The BPP reserves the right to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice for unauthorised absences.

## **11 Leave of Absence**

The BPP accepts that there may be very occasional times that a family will need to remove their child from school due to unforeseen or exceptional circumstances. Where an extended absence is unavoidable, parents must apply to the Headteacher /Head of School for permission. However, there is no legal obligation to grant permission and each request will be viewed on merit, and up-to-date attendance figures for the child will be obtained prior to the meeting.

A Leave of Absence form will be completed by the parent/carer and signed by the Headteacher. A copy of the permission slip will be retained in the child's file for future reference.

## **12 Data Collection – Monitoring and Reviewing**

All pupil's attendance is reviewed on a daily basis by LAB staff.

Persistent absenteeism is defined as missing 10% of possible sessions, individual attendance is monitored weekly to identify pupils who may trigger as persistent absentees.

Intervention strategies take place as appropriate.

Pupils with attendance concerns are highlighted and interventions agreed.

Pupil attendance concerns are discussed at weekly meetings on a regular basis as part of BPP 'safeguarding'.

## **13 Reintegration of Pupils After Absence**

It is vital that pupils who have been absent feel welcomed back into school.

Pupils who have been absent for long periods may be supported by an Integration programme, this may include a flexible timetable.

## **14 Target Setting**

Whilst we would hope for all students to have 100% attendance, we recognise the fact that this is not possible in all cases. Individual pupils with lower than expected attendance will be given a realistic target for improvement and will be monitored on a regular basis. Significant improvement or an effort to do so is recognised and praised. The BPP will endeavour to recognise and support those pupils with severe medical conditions which severely impacts on their attendance to school.

The BPP has to submit an annual attendance target to the DFE and the whole school community should strive towards achieving this.

## 15 **Communication**

The BPP Attendance Policy will be communicated through:

- Through attendance print outs sent with progress reports
- Assemblies/ circle times
- In the home/school agreement
- Guidance and Advice in the Staff Handbook
- BPP website

## 17 **Overview chart of communication links and processes**

**The Headteacher/Head of School:** has overall responsibility for the BPP Attendance Strategy supported by the LABs.

**The LAB:** has overall responsibility for strategy and directs the attendance work of the BPP stakeholders and liaises with other agencies. The LAB monitors group and individual attendance and reconciles absence reports each week.

**Senior Leaders:** support the implementation of the BPP Attendance Strategy within the schools.

**The Classteacher:** supports the BPP Attendance Strategy by completing registers accurately, and liaising with LAB staff over individual attendance concerns. The class teacher is expected to discuss attendance concerns with pupils and parent/ carers at Termly Learning Conferences.

**The Administration Team:** supports the BPP Attendance Strategy by reconciling absences and pupil lateness. They process overall attendance data on a weekly basis, and individual attendance data on request.

## 18 **The Process**

Parents are requested to ring school by 9.00 am to notify the school that their child will be absent. The school will then authorise absences that are due to sickness, religious observance etc.

- The school registers are closed at 9.20am each morning. Children who have not arrived by the end of registration are marked absent. Latecomers should report to the school office on arrival. The child will be given a 'late after register closed' mark.
- If the school has been informed that the child will arrive late due to a medical/dental appointment, then an attendance mark will be given on arrival.

## 19 **Absence**

- A child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised if no satisfactory explanation is given for absence or if the school considers the information received from a parent is not an acceptable reason for absence.

- Attendance will be monitored weekly and parents will be informed of their child's low attendance level half termly if it falls below 97% without good reason, or a child continues to be absent for more than 5 consecutive days without explanation.

## **20 After School Club Attendance**

Children who are registered to attend after school clubs are expected to attend the club session that day, if they are present at school, unless the parent/carer has informed the school.

A register is taken at the beginning of each club session and the parent/carer of a child who is absent without prior reason is phoned to establish the child's whereabouts.

If a child fails to attend a club, without prior notification, the child is removed from the club and the parent/carers informed.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the BPP Child Protection Policy, and forms a part of the BPP Safeguarding Policy.