



## **Baines' Endowed Church of England Primary Academy**

### **Attendance Management Policy**

Our mission statement at Baines' Endowed Church of England Primary is:

*"With God, nothing is impossible" Luke 1:37*

To support our pupils, staff, parents/carers and governors in their quest to achieve the 'impossible', we will teach, guide and nurture our community in the following twelve values:

generosity	compassion	courage	forgiveness
friendship	respect	thankfulness	trust
perseverance	justice	service	truthfulness

At Baines' Endowed, we believe that by valuing all God's children and teaching them to learn, develop and grow in the Gospel values, we will allow them the opportunity to believe that, with the help and love of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, they can achieve what they aim to achieve.

Refer also to: Child Protection and Pastoral Care Policy  
 Communication and Relationship Management Policy  
 Anti Bullying Policy  
 Local Authority Attendance Strategy  
 DfE academy Attendance 2020 (non-statutory)  
 DfE academy attendance parental responsibility measures  
 Jan 2015 (statutory)  
 Working Together to Improve Attendance 2022

At Baines' Endowed Primary Academy we are committed to providing a full and efficient education for all our pupils. Regular attendance (every day) and punctuality will ensure maximum benefit is derived from the academy's curriculum both in emotional, academic and personal development.

We aim:

- to create a calm, positive and welcoming environment where pupils feel happy and secure, and where the whole academy community feels valued whatever their gender, race or ability so that we all develop a sense of pride in both ourselves and the academy.
- to enable each child to achieve their full potential through a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which motivates and stimulates them and allows pupils to become effective and independent learners.

- to ensure that parents/carers and children understand the importance of good attendance and punctuality.

We will avoid unauthorised absences by:

- Developing a close liaison with parents/carers/carers
- Providing effective pastoral care
- Showing staff commitment to full attendance
- Monitoring attendance
- Working closely with the Pupil Welfare Officer and relevant agencies.
- Promoting good and improved attendance and punctuality.

#### Expectations of Pupils

- They attend academy every day or nursery for all of their allocated sessions
- They arrive on time and appropriately prepared for the day
- They will tell a member of staff about any problems or reasons that may prevent them from attending academy.

#### Expectations of parents/carers

- They ensure their children attend every day and punctually.
- They ensure they contact the academy by 9.30am on any day a child is unable to attend.
- They ensure their children arrive at the academy well prepared for the day.
- They contact the academy in confidence whenever any problem occurs that may affect their child's attendance.

#### Parents/carers and Pupils can expect:

- Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.
- Early contact (by 10am) when a pupil fails to attend the academy without a reason being provided.
- Confidential action on any problem notified to us. (Confidential means that the member of staff notified will not disclose that information to anybody without the consent of the pupil or their parent, unless it is an issue of child protection or other professional requirement)
- Recognition for good and/or improved attendance
- A quality education.

#### **Children Missing Education**

Blackpool Council and academies have a clear role to play in helping to trace children who go missing from education. Blackpool schools and academies follow clear procedures in relation to those pupils who are removed from academy by their parents/carers without a named academy destination being provided and confirmed. Once a child's whereabouts has been confirmed the previous academy will remove them from their academy register from the last day of attendance. Parents/carers must provide a forwarding address, particularly if it is abroad. Therefore, as soon as a child mentions to staff in the academy that they are moving, the academy will begin making enquiries with parents/carers and recording the information. It is vitally important that up-to-date mobile numbers and email addresses are shared with the academy prior to leaving the area for ease of contact. Parents/carers should be advised that if this does not occur and the local authority fails to locate a child they

have a duty to report the child as missing to the Police and Social Care. Should the academy or the Local Authority fail to locate the family after all possible avenues have been explored the child can be removed from the academy roll. The Local Authority should then record the child on the “children missing from education” database for further investigation. MOC (Movement of Child) form to be completed by the academy and sent to the Pupil Welfare Service.

Where a child fails to attend nursery for their allocated session, staff will make contact with the family or other ‘contacts’ to ascertain the reason. If staff are unable to make contact via phone and/or determine a date that the child will be returning after two missed sessions, contact with any other professionals involved with the family will be attempted or a home visit will be considered for safeguarding purposes. Where a child does not attend for two weeks of sessions, discussions with parents/carers will outline the possibility of the place being withdrawn. Contact will be made with any other professionals involved with the family to inform of the outcome. Where there are no other professionals involved, contact with the local Children’s Centre Hub and/or RfS (Request for Support Hub) may be made.

Blackpool Council must be informed of any pupil who fails to attend the academy regularly or has been absent without the academy’s permission for up to 10 days. Local authorities have a duty to put in place arrangements for identifying (as far as it is possible) those children of compulsory school age in their area who are not registered or receiving education other than at a school/academy. Local authorities should trace those children and ensure that they receive full-time education.

### **Parents/Carers**

The term ‘parent’ refers to either one, or both, parents, or the child’s carer.

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines ‘parent’ to also include:

- all natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- any person who although not a natural parent, has parental ‘responsibility’ for the child or young person;
- any person who, although not a natural parent, ‘has care’ of the child or young person.

Section 3 of the Children Act 1989 defines ‘parental responsibility’ (PR) as all the rights, duties, powers, responsibilities and authority which by law a parent has in relation to a child and his/her property.

In the case of children who are ‘looked after’ by the Local Authority, (Our Children - OC/Looked After Child -LAC), parental responsibility is with the allocated Social Worker, as the LA is the corporate parent.

### **Legal Framework**

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents/carers must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude to any special educational needs they may have. This would normally be through regular (every day) attendance at the academy. A child is of compulsory school age, after the next of the following dates; 31<sup>st</sup> March, 31<sup>st</sup> August and 31<sup>st</sup> December, after their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. However, in Blackpool our young

people are encouraged to start their education from the September of the year after they have reached the age of four. A child ceases to be of compulsory school age on the last Friday in June of the academic year in which they reach the age of 16.

### **Statutory Responsibilities**

Under the Education Act 1996, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure that parents/carers secure education for children of compulsory school age and, where necessary, will use legal enforcement.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, require school's to take an attendance register twice a day, once at the start of the morning session and then again during the afternoon session.

### **Legal Sanctions**

When there is an issue with absence from the academy, the academy will do all that they can to ensure the child/young person and family are supported to improve attendance.

Where these interventions fail to bring about an improvement in attendance, the Local Authority will be notified and legal action in the Magistrates' Court may be taken. The academy will provide the Local Authority with evidence required for a prosecution under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and will appear as a prosecution witness if required by the court. This is to ensure that parents/carers realise their own responsibilities in ensuring attendance at the academy and most importantly about returning children to education.

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 states that if a parent/carer fails to ensure the regular academy attendance of their child, if he/she is a registered pupil at an academy and is of compulsory academy age, then they are guilty of an offence. A parent found guilty of this offence can be fined up to £2500 and / or be imprisoned for a period of up to three months.

Alternatives to Section 444 prosecution are Parenting Contracts, Penalty Notices or an Education Supervision Order.

### **Parenting Contracts (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003)**

A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between the academy and the parent. It can also be extended to include the child and any other agencies offering support to resolve any difficulties leading to improved attendance. The contract will outline attendance targets and will detail agreed actions that will help to achieve the target. The contract will be reviewed regularly. The contract can be used as evidence in a prosecution should parents/carers fail to carry out agreed actions.

### **Penalty Notices (Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003)**

Penalty Notices can be considered when:

- A pupil is absent from academy due to an accumulation of unauthorised leave (at least 10 sessions/5 days through one term or 14 sessions/7 days through two terms) during term time, including holidays or a failure to improve attendance after a written warning has been received.

A Penalty Notice Warning Letter gives the parent the opportunity to improve their child's attendance. If attendance improves with no unauthorised absences during the specified period, no further action will be taken at that point. However, if attendance fails to improve, a fine may be issued.

If parents/carers take a child out of the academy for the purposes of a holiday, they may be issued with a Penalty Notice. Penalty notices are issued per parent/carer per pupil.

Parents/carers must, if issued with a Penalty Notice, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. This brings attendance penalty notices into line with other types of penalty notices and allows local authorities to act faster on prosecution. Failure to pay the Penalty Notice may result in a prosecution under Section 444 (1) of the Education Act 1996. Penalty Notices will be used in accordance with Blackpool Council's Penalty Notice Protocol.

### **Categorising absence**

Where pupils of compulsory school age are recorded as absent, the register must show whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by the academy and cannot be authorised by parents/carers. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation for the pupil's absence has been received. This would not include holidays, please see leave of absence requests below.

Parents/carers/carers should advise the academy by 9.30am (by telephone or ParentApp) on the first day of absence and provide the academy with an expected date of return. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers.

### **Absence and Attendance Codes**

#### **Present at academy**

Pupils must not be marked present if they were not in the academy during registration. If a pupil were to leave the academy premises after registration they would still be counted as present for statistical purposes.

Parents/carers/carers are expected to ensure that their child is punctual for the start of the academy day (no later than 8.55am). If a child arrives late, they miss valuable 'settling in', early activities and valuable teaching time and often feel embarrassed. Poor punctuality can lead to underachievement, poor self esteem, absence and safeguarding issues.

The DfE recommends that schools/academies leave registers open for 30 minutes after the start of the school day. Children arriving after that time (9.25am) will receive an absence mark for the morning they have missed (U). Frequent lateness of pupils can provide grounds for prosecution of parents/carers.

***'10 minutes every day over 2 weeks equates to 1 hour 40 minutes of missed opportunities of learning.'***

On arrival, after the close of external doors (8.55am), pupils must register immediately at the academy office in order to meet health and safety regulations.

Pupils will be given a discreet registration card to give to their teacher to inform them that they have been registered at the office.

### **Present at an Approved Off-Site Educational Activity**

An approved educational activity is where a pupil is taking part in supervised educational activity such as field trips, educational visits, work experience or alternative provision. The activity must be of an educational nature approved by the academy and supervised by someone authorised by the academy. The activity must take place during the session for which the mark is recorded.

### **Code B: Off-site educational activity**

Used for pupils that are present at a supervised educational activity that is off-site and approved by the academy. Academies should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the academy of any absences by individual pupils. The academy should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

### **Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment**

The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one academy. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other academy at which they are registered.

The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a Pupil Referral Unit, a hospital school or a specialist provision on a temporary basis. Each school/academy should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their academy.

### **Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity**

This code will be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the academy and supervised by someone authorised by the academy.

### **Code V: Educational visit or trip**

This code will be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the academy, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the academy.

### **Authorised Absence from academy**

'Authorised absence' means that the academy has either given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory academy age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

### **Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the academy**

Only exceptional circumstances warrant leave of absence. The academy will consider each request individually taking into account the circumstances, such as: the nature of the event for which leave is sought; the frequency of the request; whether the parent/carers gave advance notice; and the pupil's attainment, attendance and ability to catch up on missed education.

### **Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made**

If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but they are still on the admission register, they will be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Where alternative provision is made they will be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

### **Code B: Excluded (Alternative provision offered)**

Should this arrangement extend over a 5 day period, academies have a duty to provide alternative provision.

### **Code H: Family holiday authorised by the academy**

Parents/carers should not take their children on holiday during term time. Parents/carers do not have an automatic right to remove their child from academy during term time for the purpose of a holiday. Academies are closed for 13 weeks a year. Parents/carers have 175 days in which to take holidays outside of academy hours. Regulations state that Headteachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Amendments to the 2006 regulations, which came into force on 01 September 2013, remove references to family holiday and extended leave as well as the statutory threshold of ten academy days. The amendments make clear that Head teachers should not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers will determine the number of academy days a child can be away from academy if the leave is granted.

Any application for leave should be made at least two weeks in advance and the Headteacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. This will be assessed on a case by case situation. Where leave of absence is granted the Headteacher will determine the number of days the pupil can be away from school. Leave of absence is granted entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

### **Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments)**

Parents/carers should advise the academy by 9.30am (by telephone or ParentApp) on the first day of absence and provide the academy with an expected date of return. This should be followed up with medical evidence where this is considered appropriate. Alternative arrangements will be agreed with non-English speaking parents/carers. Parents/carers may be asked to provide medical evidence where there are repeated absences due to reported illness. This will usually be once a child's attendance falls below 92% however each case will be looked at individually and based upon criteria such as number of periods of illness, the term in which attendance data has been collected and if there is an underlying medical condition which would cause repeated absence. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards or sight of the child's dated and named medication etc. rather than doctors' notes. Photocopies of evidence provided will be kept in confidential files.

### **Code M: Medical or dental appointments**

Parents/carers are advised to make medical and dental appointments outside of the academy day in order to cause minimal disruption to learning. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of the academy for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment. Parents/carers must show evidence of

appointments to the academy. Parents/carers are expected to bring their child into the academy before and after appointments whenever this is reasonably practicable.

### **Code R: Religious observance**

Blackpool Council acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside academy holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance. It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend academy on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent/carers religious body. Where necessary, academies should seek advice from the parents/carers' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance. If the religious body has not set the day apart there is no requirement for the academy to approve the absence or grant leave of absence. parents/carers are encouraged to give advance notice to the academy if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the academy and limiting the authorised absence rate of the academy, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised

### **Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence**

A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers.

The expectation for the attendance of Traveller children, as with all other children, is to attend academy every day (as regularly and as frequently as possible). Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school/ academy and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend the academy every day once registered there.

If the pupil's family is known to be travelling but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision (at a academy or other provider), the absence should be authorised and recorded using code T. It is the expectation of the academy that parents/carers will give a date for the expected return along with keeping in regular contact.

To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children, dual registration is allowed. An academy cannot remove a Traveller child from roll while they are travelling if it is the base academy. If the pupil is known to be dual registered and present at another academy during the session in question, the attendance should be recorded using code D. The Blackpool academy in this instance will become the base academy and will record their register as a code D for dual registration until the child returns.

If a child fails to return on their agreed date with no contact, the academy must notify the Local Authority as soon as possible. parents/carers should be advised that if the academy or the Local Authority fails to locate the family after 20 days the child can



be removed from the academy roll. The Local Authority should then record the child on the “children missing from education” database for further investigation.

### **Unauthorised Absence from academy**

Unauthorised absence is where a school/academy is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

### **Code G: Family holiday not authorised by the academy or in excess of agreed period**

See also Code H. Leave of absence will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of the Headteacher.

‘If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.’

### **Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided**

The academy should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil’s absence. When the reason for the pupil’s absence has been established the register should be amended.

### **Code O: Absent from academy without authorisation**

If the academy is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised.

When a child/young person’s attendance is a cause for concern, absences will not be authorised unless in extenuating circumstances or medical evidence is provided e.g. a Doctor’s note, a prescription, sight of a named/dated medicine bottle etc. Unauthorised absence could result in legal action being initiated by the Local Authority. At Baines’ we begin to discuss requesting medical evidence when a child’s attendance is inconsistent and absences are regular, causing a number of broken weeks in a half term. Other initiatives such as Fast Track will be considered for children whose attendance is between 88 and 93% , parental contracts and/or meetings of concern may be initiated.

### **Code U: Arrived in academy after registration closed**

We, at Baines’, actively discourage late arrival, look for patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent. Frequent lateness of pupils can also provide grounds for prosecution of parents/carers. Code U will be used if a child arrives after 9.25am

### **Code X: Not required to be in academy**

This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory academy age children are not expected to attend.

### **Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances**

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The academy site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or

- The transport provided by the academy or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or
- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending academy.

### **Deletions from the Register**

A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006. Schools/academies must inform their local authority in advance of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register.

All schools/academies will follow Blackpool Council's Children Missing Education Protocol when a pupil's whereabouts is unknown.

### **Recording Attendance**

- Electronic registers (Cloud Academy) are maintained in each class whereby the teacher marks a pupil's attendance with a / \ or N in the appropriate place for the morning and afternoon sessions.
- The registers are taken at 8:55am for the morning session, and 1:15pm for the afternoon session.
- The registers must be 'saved' in order to be received by the academy office.
- Any child who arrives after these times will be recorded as late up to 9.25am or 1:30pm. After these times they will be recorded as arriving late after the register has closed (unauthorised absence **U code**).

\*Any notes given to staff regarding children's absences must be given to the office staff as a matter of priority to avoid unnecessary additional communication with parents/carers.

\*Any issues regarding taking the register electronically must be reported to the academy office immediately to ensure a paper register can be completed.

### **Recording Attendance in Nursery**

A register will be taken by a member of nursery staff at the beginning of each session. If a child arrives after 30 minutes of the start of the session they will be recorded as late (L). It is the responsibility of the child's key worker to obtain a reason for any absences and record them. Staff must inform the nursery manager if they are concerned about a child's attendance and be aware that poor attendance and/or punctuality could be a safeguarding issue.

### **Authorised Absences**

All parents/carers are asked to contact the academy by 9.30am on the first day of absence explaining the reason for their child's absence. If a child is absent from the academy after the register has closed (9:25am) and the academy has not been informed of the reason for the absence, the academy will attempt to contact the child's family and ascertain the reason for the absence. In the first instance this will occur by means of a ParentApp message (If the parent/carer does not have access to ParentApp they will receive an email or phone call). See below for the full procedure.

The Headteacher is responsible for authorising absences and it may be that a reason given for the absence is not acceptable. The Headteacher is unable to authorise any absences for holidays. Parents/carers will be informed of this at least annually through the monthly newsletters along with other methods of communication used by the academy (Website/Twitter/ParentApp)

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

At Baines', along with Blackpool Council, we believe that improved academy attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the academy staff, governors, parents/carers, pupils and the wider academy community.

### **The Local Governing Committee will:**

- Ensure that the importance and value of good (every day) attendance is promoted to pupils and their parents/carers
- Review the academy's Attendance Policy and ensure the required resources are available to fully implement the policy
- Identify a member of the governing body to lead on attendance matters and attend panel meetings as required.
- Ensure that the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Monitor the academy's attendance and related issues through termly reporting at Governing Body Meetings
- Ensure that attendance data is reported to the Local Authority or Department for Education as required and on time
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance
- Ensure that the academy has clear systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site
- Ensure that there are procedures for collecting and analysing attendance data frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Ensure that data is understood and used to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions

### **The Leadership Team will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good (every day) attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers
- Ensure that there is a whole academy approach which reinforces good (every day) attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Monitor the implementation of the Attendance Policy and ensure that the policy is reviewed every two years or sooner if necessary.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues
- Ensure that the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation is complied with
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader to lead on attendance and allocate sufficient time and resource
- Return academy attendance data to the Local Authority and the Department for Education as required and on time

- Report the academy's attendance and related issues through termly reporting to the Governing Body and on a half termly basis to the lead governor for attendance
- Ensure that systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils, including those who are educated off-site are implemented
- Ensure that attendance data is collected and analysed frequently to identify causes and patterns of absence
- Interpret the data to devise solutions and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Develop a multi-agency response to improve attendance and support pupils and their families
- Document interventions used to a standard required by the local authority should legal proceedings be instigated

**Class Teachers/Nursery Staff will:**

- Actively promote the importance and value of good (every day) attendance to pupils and their parents/carers
- Form positive relationships with pupils and parents/carers
- Contribute to a whole academy approach which reinforces good (every day) academy attendance; with good teaching and learning experiences that encourage all pupils to attend and to achieve
- Comply with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 and other attendance related legislation
- Contribute to the evaluation of academy strategies and interventions
- Work with other agencies to improve attendance and support pupils and their families

**The academy will request that parents/carers:**

- Talk to their child about the academy and what goes on there, taking a positive interest in their child's work and educational progress
- Instil the value of education and regular (every day) academy attendance within the home environment
- Encourage their child to look to the future and have aspirations
- Contact the academy/nursery if their child is absent to let them know the reason why and the expected date of return
- Avoid unnecessary absences
- Ask the academy/nursery for help if their child is experiencing difficulties.
- Inform the academy/nursery of any change in circumstances that may impact on their child's attendance
- Support the academy; take every opportunity to get involved in their child's education, form a positive relationship with the academy and acknowledge the importance of children receiving the same messages from both academy and home
- Encourage positive routines at home, for example, bed times, homework, preparing academy bag and uniform the evening before
- Not keep their child off the academy to go shopping, to help at home or to look after other members of the family
- Not taking leave of absence (holidays) during term-time.

\*Parents/carers can request support from a variety of staff either via email, ParentApp, telephone or in person.

### **Attendance in the Early Years**

Children with poor attendance in the Early Years have little chance of catching up with their peers.

Blackpool schools/ academies operate the same procedures to promote good attendance for 2, 3 and 4 year olds to attend their provision regularly (every day) as they do for children of statutory school age; it is known that regular (every day) attendance in these early years is crucial for a child to adopt positive attendance and punctuality habits and routines for future learning.

### **Persistent Absence**

A child is a persistent absentee if s/he has 90% or less attendance. Details of these children are submitted to the Local Authority and Central Government. Persistent absence is a serious problem for pupils. Much of the work children miss when they are absent is never made up, leaving these pupils at a considerable disadvantage for the remainder of their academy career. There is also clear evidence of a link between poor attendance and low levels of achievement. If a child is identified as being on track to be persistently absent an action plan/interventions will be put in place to support them.

### **Severe Absence**

A child is severely absent if s/he has 50% or less attendance.

### **Pupil Mobility / Inter-academy/school transfers**

Blackpool Council strives to reduce the incidences of mobility within the town and there are robust procedures in place to deter parents/carers from requesting school/academy moves. School/academy transfers occur at the end of a half term unless there is an exceptional circumstance.

Whilst a parent/carer has a right in law to express a preference for an alternative school/academy, the Local Authority, via the Admissions Team and a range of key officers (with specialist educational background), consider the reasons for a transfer request and decide how the request should be managed.

There are many reasons cited for requesting a change of school/academy. The most reasonable being a house move, which causes travel difficulties and which would impact on attendance. Other reasons cited require a discussion with the parent/carer, the academy and the Pupil Welfare Team to ensure that the move is in the child's best interest and is managed effectively.

### **Blackpool Council Support – The role of the Pupil Welfare Officer (PWO)**

The Pupil Welfare Service is a professional service, working with schools/academies and the Local Authority to improve attendance and safeguard young people. They provide expert advice and guidance to schools/academies around attendance issues and work directly with schools/academies and families to overcome barriers and improve attendance and subsequent attainment. When required, they act on behalf of the Local Authority and undertake legal proceedings.

At times we may wish to enhance the support provided to us with additional elements in order to support a whole academy approach to attendance and positive impact on attainment.

Additional support could include some or all of the below:

Direct casework support through to prosecution	Attendance initiatives
Whole academy support and development	Access to CAMHS
Safeguarding and welfare	Staff training

### **The Impact of poor academy attendance on attainment**

Ongoing poor attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. Many pupils have difficulty maintaining friendships if they have long or numerous periods of absence. The following information highlights how attendance can affect a child's future progression.

<b>Above 97% = Less than 6 days absence a year</b> Excellent attendance! Young people who are achieving above 97% will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for their future.
<b>95% = 10 days absence a year</b> These young people are likely to achieve good grades and have good future prospects, however, could still improve their attendance.
<b>90% = 19 days absence a year (Persistent Absence)</b> Young people who are taking this much time off academy will be absent for almost a month per academic year, making it difficult for them to achieve their best.
<b>85% = 29 days absence a year</b> Young people who are taking this much time off academy will be absent for almost six weeks per academic year, making it very difficult for them to keep up with their work and are unlikely to do their best.
<b>80% = 38 days absence a year</b> Young people who are constantly taking this much time off academy will be absent for one full year over the five years of education, making it almost impossible to keep up with work and dramatically limiting future prospects.
<b>50% = 85 days absence a year</b> Young people who are taking this much time off academy will be absent for seventeen weeks per academic year, their education and progress will be severely impacted by this.

### **Procedures for following up absences**

- If a message or telephone call is not received from parents/carers by 9.30am on the first day of absence, they will be contacted by ParentApp. If no contact is made then parents/carers will be contacted again on the second day of absence, by ParentApp unless there is a need to contact more urgently by telephone.
- Where there is no response, a further phone call will be made later that day, if appropriate, and another on the following day (Day 3). If we are still unable to contact the family on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of absence, a home visit from the Pupil Welfare Officer, where the service is already involved, will be instigated and

concerns noted. Home visits from other members of the Pastoral Team may be instigated for families not already involved with the PWS.

- Where we have a reason for non-attendance but this continues beyond a reasonable timescale, the parents/carers will be contacted by a member of the Pastoral Team to discuss the situation. Depending on the outcome of this conversation the case may be discussed with the Pupil Welfare Officer and further action planned. This might, in some cases, result in a referral to the Pupil Welfare Service (PWS).
- If absence becomes a recurring problem, parents/carers may be invited to attend a meeting at the academy. The meeting will include appropriate staff, PWO, parent/carer and the pupil and will identify and attempt to solve the problems that are preventing the pupil from attending.
- If there is no improvement, then the case will be discussed again with the PWO to discuss any action needed. This may result in the sending of legal letters and if necessary court action.
- Initiatives such as Fast Track and Penalty Notices may be used to improve attendance.

### **Initiatives**

**Fast Track** – a letter based initiative issued by the Pupil Welfare Service. This initiative may be used in various circumstances such as a number of broken weeks, a period of unauthorised holiday or periods of unauthorised absence. Each case will be looked at on an individual basis.

**Penalty Notice** – a £60 fine per parent/carer, per child issued by the Pupil Welfare Service for reasons such as periods of holiday absence of 10 sessions (5 days or more). This fine may be £120 if not paid in 21 days and court proceedings used if the fine is not paid at all.

### **Reintegration**

- The return to the academy for a pupil after a long-term absence requires special planning. For example a Pastoral Support Programme (PSP) may be appropriate.
- Designated staff (the learning mentor and/or the SENDCo/DHT) will be responsible for deciding on the programme for return and the management of that programme.
- Staff are aware that this could be a difficult process that may require careful handling and that any problems should be notified to the responsible staff member as soon as possible.
- Programmes may need to be tailored to meet individual need and may involve phased, part time re-entry with support in class as appropriate.

The success of the reintegration will require the involvement of appropriate academy staff, other agencies, the young person and parents/carers. Programmes should be reviewed regularly and amended as necessary.

### **Monitoring Attendance Data**

Whole academy data will be analysed regularly. A member of office staff will inform parents/carers via a letter in a ParentApp message that their child's attendance is a

cause for concern. Teachers will also discuss attendance with parents/carers should the need arise either by an informal discussion or more formally at Parents Evening.

Parents/carers of children whose attendance is a cause for concern will receive a letter in the above way advising of the need to provide medical evidence to authorise absences.

Attendance data for targeted pupils will be analysed fortnightly and parents/carers will be informed if a child's attendance is of concern. A member of office staff designated by the Headteacher is responsible for monitoring this data and liaising with the Senior Leadership Team and the Pupil Welfare Officer.

The Government expectation is that children will attend the academy every day. If concerns arise regarding a child's attendance parents/carers will be notified.

The Pupil Welfare Officer, working alongside school office staff and the DHT, highlights a target group for case work and monitors their attendance more closely.

The impact of the action taken is monitored to ensure that progress is being made towards improving attendance across the academy. Reports are given to staff and governors to ensure the whole academy community is aware of issues and their roles and responsibilities in bringing about improvement. The academy improvement process also monitors the academy's progress towards improving attendance.

The impact of this policy is monitored in discussion with staff, governors, families and external services such as Pupil Welfare Service and in examination of attendance data produced termly as required by DFE.

## **Review**

*Policy to be reviewed August 2023 (or sooner if legislation changes) by Attendance Lead/SLT/SAT (School Administration Team)*

*signed ..... date ..... Attendance Lead/SLT*

*signed ..... date ..... Chair of Governors*



# Further sources of information

## Associated resources

- The Education Act 1996: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/56/contents>
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/1751/contents/made>
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/1725/contents/made>
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1625/contents/made>
- The Education Act 2002: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents>
- The Education (academy Day and academy Year) (England) Regulations 1999: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1999/3181/contents/made>
- The Changing of academy Session Times (England) (Revocation) Regulations 2011: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1954/made>
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/37/contents>
- The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2003/38/contents>
- The Education Act 2005: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents>
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents>
- The Education (Parenting Contracts and Parenting Orders) (England) Regulations 2007: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/1869/contents/made>
- Magistrates' Courts (Parenting Orders) (Amendment) Rules 2007: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/2222/made>
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) Regulations 2007: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2007/1867/contents/made>
- The Education and Skills Act 2008: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/25/contents>
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/1046/contents/made>
- Copy of Attorney General's Guidelines for Crown Prosecutors can be found at: <http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/prosecution/index.html>
- Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/police/powers/pace-codes/> Appendix 2

### Authorised Absence (Appendix 1)

The following may be reasons for authorising absences:

- Illness
- Family bereavements
- Medical and dental appointments
- Fixed term exclusion
- Permanent exclusion until removed from roll or re-instated
- Educated off site
- Approved sporting activity
- Religious observance
- Educational visit
- Other authorised circumstances at the discretion of the Headteacher

### **Quick Reference Information for Parents/Carers**

- Children must attend school every day and on time unless they are too unwell.
- Parents/Carers must call school/send a Parent App message **before** 9.30am if their child is too unwell to attend school.
- A late mark will be recorded if your child arrives after 8.55am.
- An absent mark will be recorded if your child arrives after 9.25am.
- Contact details must be up to date and there must be more than one contact in case of emergencies.
- School will monitor the children's attendance and liaise with parents/carers to support good (every day) attendance.
- Our Pupil Welfare Officer (Julie Talbot) will also support families as necessary