



Barkisland CE (VA) Primary School
WE BELIEVE, WE NURTURE, WE SUCCEED!

Barkisland CE VA Primary School

Attendance Policy

School Staff to Support Attendance

The School's strategic leader for attendance is the Headteacher, Mrs Schofield

The School's attendance officer is Mrs Young

Please contact the school office using the school spider app on a day-to-day basis when your child is absent or for any queries regarding attendance.

The School parent support advisor/safeguarding & pastoral lead is Mrs Young

Ratified May 2024	Review date: Summer 2025
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Statement of Intent

Barkisland CE VA Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach his or her full potential, including attainment, wellbeing and wider life chances. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, schoolwork, and friendship groups. Therefore, those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and a more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training.

For the most vulnerable pupils, regular attendance is also an important protective factor and offers the best opportunity for needs to be identified and support provided.

The aim of this Attendance Policy is to enable Barkisland CE VA Primary School to outline a process which actively and consistently encourages and supports the highest possible levels of attendance for all our pupils. We support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend school regularly and on time each day.

Barkisland CE VA Primary School takes a whole-school approach to maintaining regular attendance and to achieve this, all members of our school community have an important contribution to make. Data is collected and analysed regularly to identify patterns, trends and risks. It is vital that we work in partnership to ensure that any in-school or out-of-school barriers are removed at the earliest opportunity, this is achieved through early and meaningful support.

Barkisland CE VA Primary School recognises that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by our policies on safeguarding, anti-bullying, behaviour and inclusive learning. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010.

Legal Framework

Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act states that parents must ensure that children of compulsory school age receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude and to any special educational needs they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise, except when a statutory reason applies.

A child is of Compulsory School Age at the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday.

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

Responsibilities

To manage and promote regular attendance Barkisland CE VA Primary School will:

Follow the DfE, Government and Local Authority guidance in relation to school attendance which includes;

- Have in place a clear school attendance policy which all leaders, staff, pupils and parents understand.
- Review the attendance policy annually and publish on the school website.
- Accurately complete admission (school roll) and attendance registers and have effective day to day processes in place to follow-up absence.
- Complete statutory data returns.
- Ensure they have at least two emergency contacts for every child in order to maximise the chance of making contact regarding a child's absence.
- Monitor individual students' attendance to identify pupils who are vulnerable and persistently or severely absent from school.
- Utilise attendance data, regularly analysing patterns and trends to target attendance and punctuality improvement across pupil cohorts or individual pupils, to reduce persistent or severe absence from school.
- Ensure there are processes in place to address concerns with parents around engagement and attendance through building positive relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance. The link between attendance, attainment and wider wellbeing will be discussed with parents.
- Provide updates on overall attendance and individual pupil's attendance and how this is impacting on learning and achievement via letters home, newsletters, social media and the school website.
- Account for and consider the specific needs of pupils and their families where there may be other barriers to attendance (medical conditions or special educational needs and disabilities) and provide support to overcome these barriers. (e.g. Early Help or other wider partners)
- Support pupils back into school following a length or unavoidable period of absence and provide support to build confidence and bridge gaps.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area.

To manage and promote the regular attendance of their children, parents will:

- Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.
- Understand their responsibility to keep the school up to date with 3 emergency contact details (including someone who does not live at the same address as the child) as required by the Children Missing Education requirements
- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance and punctuality by arriving on time each day and keeping absences to a minimum. Ensure that requests for leave of

absence are made only in exceptional circumstances and that children are only out of school when they are too ill to attend.

- Establish effective communication with the school and swiftly address any barriers they may be experiencing or worries their children may have about coming to school so that we can work together to resolve this.
- Contact Barkisland CE VA Primary School via the School Spider app on the first day of absence to inform school of the reason and when the child is expected to return. Keep school informed daily (unless otherwise agreed) if the absence is likely to continue so that school and partner agencies can ensure that amendments or alternatives can be made to provision if required.
- Provide the school with any medical appointment cards or messages and where possible make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible, parents should ensure that children attend school prior to or following their appointment.
- Attend any meetings called Barkisland CE VA Primary School and partner agencies to discuss attendance.
- Pro-actively engage with any support offered to prevent the need for more formal / legal intervention.

In order to support schools and academies in managing and promoting regular school attendance, the Governing Body will;

- Take an active role in attendance improvement, support their schools to prioritise attendance and work together with leaders to set a whole school culture where attendance is highly valued.
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties.
- Ensure school staff receive training on attendance.
- Regularly review attendance data and help school leaders focus support on the pupils who need it.

In order to support schools and academies in managing and promoting regular school attendance, the Education Welfare Service will;

Identify a key strategic lead to work collaboratively with School/ Academy, to:

- Support in fulfilling their responsibilities in relation to improving attendance.
- Attend meetings with Barkisland CE VA Primary School to identify children with irregular school attendance and develop strategies to ensure that all children can attend school regularly.
- Support the school in promoting attendance by providing advice, guidance and creation of action plans in relation to working together to improve attendance.
- Offer opportunities for all schools in the area to share effective practice.
- Hold a termly conversation with every school to identify, discuss and signpost or provide access to services for pupils who are persistently or severely absent or at risk of becoming so.
- Where there are out of school barriers, provide each identified pupil and their family with access to the services they need in the first instance.
- Facilitate a multi-agency approach through completing a voluntary early help assessment as appropriate.
- Be especially conscious of potential safeguarding issues which may arise from persistent or severe absence.
- Track local attendance data to prioritise support and unblock area wide attendance barriers where they impact numerous schools.
- Secure regular attendance of pupils who are looked after or have special educational needs, through working closely with partners and ensuring the appropriate plans and educational provision are in place.

- Review referrals from school to address matters of poor school attendance when Early help and intervention has failed to improve attendance by: a) Visiting parents' homes to undertake an assessment of need and to challenge and resolve matters of poor school attendance. b) Involve other agencies where appropriate, such as Public Health (school nurses) or Early Help. In situations where all other strategies have failed to improve school attendance, the Education Welfare Service will enforce Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and the Children Act 1989, which may result in a fine up to £2,500; a Parenting Order; a community order; or a custodial sentence. Consideration will also be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice in case of unauthorised absence where appropriate and/or a Parenting Contract or Education Supervision Order.

The Attendance Register

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

Registration

School day start time: 8.55am

School day end time: 3.30pm

Morning registers should all be completed by: 9.00am

Afternoon registers should be completed by 1:05pm (EYFS and KS1) and 1.25pm (KS2)

Any pupils arriving after the start times should report to reception so that they can be given a late mark; all pupils arriving after this time should be accompanied by a parent so that a reason for lateness can be given; the number of minutes late is recorded in order to measure the impact of lost education due to late arrival.

The register must record for each session (am and pm), whether the pupil was:

- present;
- absent;
- present at approved educational activity; or
- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance;

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late Arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstance
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
T	Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised Absence		
G	Unauthorised Holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed
Other		
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel because of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half term/bank holiday

Absences

Parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absences on the first day a child is not attending school and each subsequent day unless otherwise agreed. Barkisland CE VA Primary School will follow the First Day Calling Procedures if no contact has been made to school.

- Registers should be taken by staff at **8.55 am PROMPTLY and saved by 9.00am**. For Nursery, any information about absent children is emailed between the office and Nursery staff. This should be completed as close to 9am as possible.

The taking of accurate registers for each session is a crucial part of the daily safeguarding of our pupils. Therefore, it is imperative that registers are taken accurately and promptly

- The office must be notified as soon as possible for any child who arrives after the Register has been taken unless the late child has already come through the main entrance.
- Registers are checked as soon after **9.00 am** as possible by office staff on SIMS.
- If we haven't already received notification from a parent/carer (whether phone call, email, school spider notification, message left on school answer phone); **by 9.15 am**, a first message and email is sent out on the School Spider system to ascertain a reason for a child's absence.
- If contact has still not been made by **9.45 am**, a telephone call is then made on the chain of numbers on the child's contact card. Including the 3rd person (who does not live at the same address as the child).
- If no contact can still be made after this, the Headteacher (Safeguarding Lead) should be alerted and a home visit will be carried out, where possible.
- If still no contact following the home visit, a note on school headed paper will be posted through the home address asking parents/carers to contact school asap and a 'child missing in education' referral will be made.
- **If parents/carers have notified school of their child's absence via email or the School Spider system, a member of school staff will make verbal contact (phone call) with a parent/carer on Day 3 of a continued absence for an update.**

It is school that makes the decision whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence. School will make this decision based on the information available to them. Parents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible and information such as appointment cards, medication or application for leave of absence. This will assist school in making this decision.

If a child's attendance falls below 95%, school will communicate this with parents and expect attendance to improve with regular monitoring of this.

Where a child's attendance falls below 90%, parents may be invited to meet with school staff responsible for managing attendance to identify barriers and explore potential support mechanisms.

Parents of children with persistent absence (below 85%) may be referred to the Education Welfare Service and this can lead to legal interventions and a formal assessment. Prior to this referral, parents may be invited to an attendance panel on where there is an opportunity to discuss reasons for absence with school staff or a panel of other educational professionals.

School is aware that when attendance is monitored earlier in the school year, e.g Autumn term, percentage of attended may be skewed over a short time period and winter illness may affect a pupil's attendance record.

Request for leave of absence or holidays in term time

School follows Government guidance with respect to leave of absence in term time; there are only exceptional reasons where a term time absence will be authorised. Absence due to family holidays in term time are not typically authorised.

All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form as far in advance as is possible (ideally at least 6 weeks). **This should be a request, not a notification of the absence.**

If parents proceed with the leave of absence in term time, Barkisland CE VA Primary School may refer to the Local Authority for a penalty notice. Penalty notices may be issued due to the deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission (where it can be demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given) and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence in the current term of at least 10 sessions.

Figure 1:

There are 190 school days each year, this means that there are 175 non-school days a year.

Attendance %	Rating	Days absent	Description
100%	Perfect Attendance	0	This is the best chance of success for your child
97%	Good Attendance	5	
95%	Improvement Required	9	Less chance of your child succeeding as it is harder for them to make progress
90%	Persistent Absenteeism	19	Serious Concern Missing this much education is not fair on your child and could result in legal action.
Below 90%	Serious Concern	More than 19 days	

*Persistent Absence is defined as: 10% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

** Severe Absence is defined as: 50% or more of sessions missed (based on each pupil's possible sessions). Absences may be authorised or unauthorised.

Monitoring and Improving Attendance

As poor attendance is habitual, prevention and early intervention is crucial. The key to this is regular data analysis to both identify and provide immediate additional support to pupils or pupil cohorts that need it, and to look at historic and emerging patterns across the school and develop strategies to address them. To achieve this, we will:

- Monitor and analyse weekly attendance patterns and trends and deliver intervention and support in a targeted way to pupils and families. This will go beyond headline attendance percentages and should look at individual pupils, cohorts and groups (including their punctuality) across the school to help schools achieve their responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Use this analysis to provide regular attendance reports to staff to facilitate discussions with pupils and their parents.
- Identify the pupils who need support and develop targeted actions for those cases.

- Conduct thorough analysis of half-termly, termly, and full year data to identify patterns and trends. This should include analysis of pupils and cohorts.
- Benchmark their attendance data (at whole school, year group and cohort level) against local, regional, and national levels to identify areas of focus for improvement. Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data. This may, for example, include pupils in a year group with higher than average absence or for pupils eligible for free school meals if their attendance falls behind that of their more advantaged peers.
- Monitor the impact of school wide attendance efforts, including any specific strategies implemented. The findings should then be used to evaluate approaches or inform future strategies.
- Provide data and reports to support the work of the board or governing body.

Part-time timetables

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances, where it is in a pupil's best interests, there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet their individual needs. For example, where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package.

A part-time timetable must only be in place for the shortest time necessary and not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement should have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time, either at school or alternative provision. There should also be formal arrangements in place for regularly reviewing it with the pupil and their parents. In agreeing to a part-time timetable, a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must treat absence as authorised.

Intervention Flow Chart

If a child's attendance falls below 95%, school will notify parent/carer of the child's irregular school attendance and offer them the opportunity and support to improve.

If parents/carers receive a letter informing them of concerns regarding their child's attendance parents/carers should:

- Speak with your child to see if there are any reasons why they are reluctant to attend
- Contact the school to discuss any difficulties you or your child may be experiencing.
- Ensure your child attends school regularly so attendance improves over time.

If there is no improvement and attendance declines to 90% or below, the school may invite the parent to an attendance meeting to explore potential barriers and solutions. There may also be a referral to the Education Welfare Team at this stage.

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You may be offered the opportunity to enter into a Parenting Contract involving working with other agencies to help improve your child's attendance.

Whilst involvement in a Parenting Contract is voluntary, if parents fail to engage with the support offered and their child's attendance remains irregular, school may instruct the local authority to issue a Penalty Notice or to begin legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court.

If parents are issued with a Penalty Notice of £60 per parent/carer, per child this must be paid in full within 21 days otherwise the Penalty will increase to £120 per parent/carer, per child. If parents fail to pay the Penalty by the 28th day, legal proceedings may be instigated against you.

If parents are found guilty of this offence they can be fined up to £2500 and/or be imprisoned for a period of three months.