

# Attendance Policy

## Burbage Primary School



**Approved by :**  
Zoe Garbutt

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## 1. Aims

Burbage Primary School believes good attendance and punctuality gives students a better opportunity for success academically and personally thus helping towards developing their skills for life. All students deserve to be able to make the most of the opportunities available to them at Burbage Primary. Good attendance and punctuality are essential now and in the future.

Burbage Primary aims to meet its obligations in regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- [The Education Act 1996](#)
- [The Education Act 2002](#)
- [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2010](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2011](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2016](#)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## 3. School procedures

### 3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the afternoon session.

See appendix I for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08:50 am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 08:50 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 13:15pm.

### **3.2 Unplanned absence**

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 08:50am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt or has been longer than 5 days the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a specialist's letter, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this.

### **3.3 Medical or dental appointments**

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

Please call the school on the morning of every absent day. However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

## **SCHOOL PHONE NUMBER – 01672 810452**

### **3.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

### **3.5 Following up absence**

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use. If we do not have a reason for absence, it will be recorded as unauthorised.

### **3.6 Reporting to parents**

Attendance data will be sent out to parents in all school reports.

## 4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

### 4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

The school will only **authorise** a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. The school may request medical evidence if a parent contacts the school to confirm the student is unwell in the form of a medical appointment card with one appointment entered, letter from a professional, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription.

Whenever a student is to be taken out of school for a medical appointment, the parent must call the school and collect the child from the school office.

The Principal may not authorise medical absence without this evidence.

The Principal will only authorise Leave of Absence if there are exceptional circumstances. However, the parent must contact the Principal in advance to secure authorisation, by completing a Student Leave of Absence Form. We define 'exceptional circumstances' as meetings with external agencies (i.e. - CAMHS). The Principal **may** also authorise events where students are involved in any supervised sporting events or trials, music/dance exams, theatre performances and participation in acts of religious worship.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal's discretion.

### **Reluctance to attend school**

If your child presents as ill in the morning, however is able to attend later in the day, please return your child to school via the school office. If you feel your child has a reluctance to attend school, please speak to their class teacher as soon as possible.

### 4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools should initiate fines to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days **per parent per child**. The payment must be made directly to the local authority. Please see Appendix 2 for more details.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute the parent or withdraw the notice.

## **5. Strategies for promoting attendance**

- Mark the registers in accordance with the law twice a day.
- Informs any parents/carers who have not contacted the school, of the absence of their child on a particular day.
- Maintains records and monitors attendance of students on a regular basis.
- Authorises absences in accordance with the government guidelines. Please note that **only** the Principal can authorise absence.
- Contacts parents/carers when the attendance falls below acceptable levels and/or when particular patterns of absence are causing concerns.
- Works with external agencies to maintain good attendance and to support the student/family with any issues that may affect attendance and punctuality to school.
- Provides reintegration support for students returning from long-term absence.
- Works with relevant external agencies if a students' attendance becomes a concern, i.e. Social Care, CAMHS, Education Welfare Service and The Police.

## **6. Attendance monitoring**

The Attendance Officer monitors pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school on every morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 4 days, we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's attendance continues to drop, we will consider involving the Local Authority.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

## **7. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **7.1 The Governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

## **7.2 The Principal**

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data.
- The Principal will report on attendance data to the governors and the Excalibur Academies Trust Board.
- The Principal also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

## **7.3 The Attendance Officer**

- Monitors attendance data at the school and individual pupil level.
- Reports concerns about attendance to the Principal
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues.
- Advises the Principal when to issue fixed-penalty notices.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Principal and Attendance Officer. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

## **9. Links with other policies**

This policy is linked to our child protection and safeguarding policy

## Appendix I: attendance codes

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
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
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
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
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 circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness



<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	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)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

# **Wiltshire Council**

## **Penalty Notice**

### **Code of Conduct**

#### **1. Rationale**

1.1 Regular and punctual attendance of pupils at school is both a legal requirement and essential for pupils to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. The Wiltshire Education Welfare Service will continue to investigate cases of irregular attendance from school and following appropriate casework, instigate legal action if appropriate. However, Penalty Notices offer a means of swift intervention which the County Council will use to deal with issues of truancy before they become entrenched.

1.2 Through section 444A and section 444B of the Education Act 1996, it has become possible that certain cases of unauthorised absence can be dealt with by way of a Penalty Notice. Penalty Notices will require the parent of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay a penalty, currently £60.00 if paid within 21 days or £120.00 if paid within 28 days.

1.3 In order to comply with Human Rights legislation, it is essential that Penalty Notices be issued in a consistent manner throughout Wiltshire. This Code of Conduct will govern the issuing of Penalty Notices for Wiltshire County Council.

#### **2. Procedure for issuing Penalty Notices**

2.1 In Wiltshire, Penalty Notices will be issued by the Education Welfare Service, by post, following authorisation by a senior member of the Education Welfare Service. The Service will ensure that the issuing of Penalty Notices is closely monitored with recipients pay the relevant penalty. In any case where the penalty is not paid within the appropriate period and where withdrawal of the Penalty Notice is not appropriate, the Education Welfare Service will instigate action through the courts as required by legislation. Prosecution in such cases would be for the offence to which the Penalty Notice relates.

2.2 No one parent will receive more than three separate Penalty Notices resulting from the unauthorised absence of an individual child in any twelve month period.

2.3 Any Penalty Notice issued must be addressed to one parent but a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent liable for the offence or offences.

2.4 An authorised officer has discretion when deciding whether to issue a Penalty Notice to one or more parents of a child. The specific circumstances in each individual case will be the determining factor.

2.5 The Education Welfare Service will receive requests to issue Penalty Notices from schools/colleges in Wiltshire, the Wiltshire Constabulary and neighbouring LEAs. The Education Welfare Service will action these requests providing that:

- The circumstances of the case meet the criteria for the issue of a Penalty Notice as specified in this Code of Conduct, and
- All necessary information is provided to the Education Welfare Service in order to establish that an offence, under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996 for

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truancy or section 103(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 for exclusion, or section 444A or section 444B has been committed.

### **3. General criteria for the issuing of a Penalty Notice**

3.1 A Penalty Notice for truancy will only be issued to a parent/carer if the pupil has at least ten sessions (5 school days) lost to unauthorised absence recorded within the previous six months.

3.2 Other than in exceptional circumstances, the issue of a Penalty Notice for truancy will be preceded by the dispatch of a formal warning letter to the parent/carer. This letter will:

- raise concern regarding the level of the unauthorised absence and giving advice regarding contact with the school and the Education Welfare Service
- advise the parent of the powers of the LA to issue Penalty Notices
- state the record of unauthorised absences which give rise to the formal warning, and
- notify the parent that continued unauthorised absence may lead to the issue of a Penalty Notice if no improvement is effected within an agreed period (normally 15 days except where exceptional circumstances apply, for example, deliberate parentally condoned unauthorised absence) or where a pupil has been caught on a truancy sweep and at least one previous sweep team contact with that pupil or pupil and parent has occurred and when the absence was found to be unauthorised (in addition to the 10 sessions lost criteria);
- notify the parent of child who has been stopped by the Police during school time other than on an organised truancy sweep and has 10 or more unauthorised absences that if their child is stopped on a future occasion, the Police will request the LA that a Penalty Notice be issued

In the case of a looked after child, a copy of the warning letter must also be sent to the child's social worker.

When a young person is stopped by the Police, during school time, outside of a truancy sweep and it is established that the young person has 10 or more unauthorised absences, then a Penalty Notice warning letter will be sent to the parent(s).

The Education Welfare Service will maintain a record of all such letters sent in any period.

3.3 In respect of a Penalty Notice issued exclusively for unauthorised holiday in term time, that the school advises parents/carers in advance, of the powers of the LA to issue a Penalty Notice in these circumstances.

3.4 A Penalty Notice for exclusion will only be issued in accordance with sections 103 and 104 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 ie if a pupil of compulsory school age has been excluded on disciplinary grounds from a relevant school, whether for a fixed period or permanently and notice has been given to a parent of the pupil.

3.5 Within this Code of Conduct, a parent is defined as set in Section 576 Education Act 1996.

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#### **4. Circumstances when Penalty Notices will be issued.**

Within Wiltshire, the issuing of Penalty Notices is considered appropriate:

4.1 In the early stages of casework, an Education Welfare Officer might form an opinion that the issuing of a Penalty Notice is appropriate eg in cases where a parent continually fails to provide an explanation for a pupil's absence in accordance with the school's procedures.

4.2 For pupils stopped during truancy sweeps or by the Police for truancy, but only after due consideration of the minimum evidential requirements have been met as agreed within the Code of Conduct and not as an on-the-spot action. The evidential requirement for Penalty Notices for pupils caught on truancy sweeps or for truancy outside of an organised sweep, will include at least one previous contact with that pupil or pupil and parent and when the school register was found not to be marked as authorised (in addition to the 10 sessions lost criteria).

4.3 Following notification from a school to the LA that a pupil has had a record of unauthorised absence from school and the circumstances appear to have been avoidable (for example: too tired after a late night, a birthday treat, family friends/relatives visiting, shopping).

4.4 Following notification from a school to the Local Authority that a parental request for a holiday in term time has not been authorised and is for a period of 10 or more sessions, continuous or aggregated within the previous six months within the current academic year.

4.5 When a pupil on the 'Fast-track to Prosecution' scheme fails to achieve the required improvement in attendance.

4.6 Following a referral from the Wiltshire Constabulary or neighbouring LA.

4.7 For pupils who are stopped by the Police in a public place during the first five school days of an Exclusion, whether for fixed period or permanently from school or, where that exclusion is for a fixed period of five days or less, any of the school days to which the exclusion relates as specified in section 103(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and is stated in the notice under section 104 to be a day on which the parent is subject to this subsection.

Within this Code of Conduct, a parent is defined as per Section 576 Education Act 1996.

#### **Procedure for withdrawing Penalty Notices**

A Penalty Notice may be withdrawn by Wiltshire LA in any case in which the authority determines that:

- a. it ought not to have been issued, or
- b. it ought not to have been issued to the person named as the recipient

Where a Penalty Notice has been withdrawn in accordance with the above, a notice of the withdrawal shall be given to the recipient and any amount paid by way of penalty in pursuance of that notice shall be repaid to the person who paid it. No proceedings shall be continued or instituted against the recipient for the offence in connection with which the withdrawn notice was issued or for an offence under s.444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 arising out of the same circumstances. *Revised: September 2013* **Payment of Penalty Notices**

The arrangements for the paying of penalties will be detailed on the Penalty Notices.