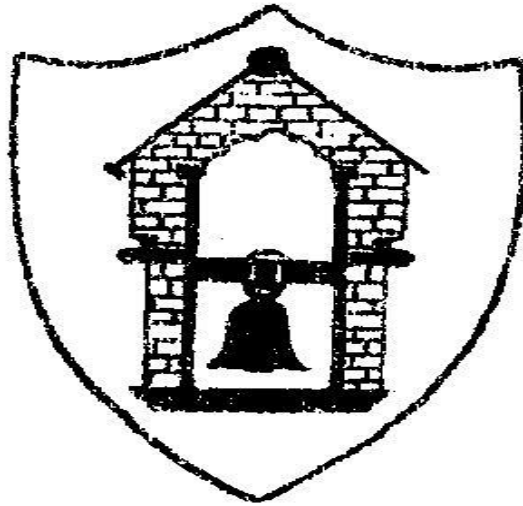


ST BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND FIRST SCHOOL

'Roots to Grow and Wings to Fly'

Attendance Policy



Approved by:	Full Governing Body	Date: 23/01/2020
Last reviewed on:	January 2020	
Next review due by:	GB2 2020-21	

Headteacher: Mrs G Coward
Chair of Governors: Miss C Govier

Rationale

Good habits which are established early in life continue into adulthood and help to develop good working routines and relationships which in turn lead to personal success and self-esteem. Regular attendance at school underpins success in all areas of the curriculum. This policy is in line with other schools in the area and reflects county and national policy. All pupils should achieve at least 96% attendance, with the aim of 100%.

Actions

In order to achieve this we will:

- Reward good attendance
- Liaise with partner schools
- Regularly raise awareness via newsletter/website
- Talk to parents and liaise with other agencies to improve attendance

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff

- Sensitively promote importance of regular attendance
- Provide good role models in terms of punctuality

In addition – Office staff

- Contact parents/carers if no call received on day of absence by 9:00 am
- Contact other agencies, where appropriate
- Contact parents/carers if pupils are unwell

School Attendance officer:

- Create letters where attendance is of concern
- Monitor patterns of attendance and report to headteacher
- Monitor pupil lateness

In addition - Teaching staff

- Record absences accurately
- Liaise with Parent Support Advisor and other agencies, if appropriate
- Monitor patterns of attendance and report to the attendance officer and headteacher

In addition – Headteacher

- Action any requests for holiday during term time – unauthorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Liaise with Outside Agencies and other local schools
- Contact parents/carers using standard letter if attendance is a concern
- Monitor pupil lateness

Governors

- Monitor the impact of the policy through the evidence in the termly Headteacher's report and review annually

Parents/Carers

- Contact school by close of registration on each day of illness/absence **(9.00am)**
- Avoid holidays during the term
- Provide medical evidence of absence if required

Pupils

- Make every effort to maintain a good attendance record in order to achieve their potential
- Arrive at school on time

Persistent Absence – 10% of absence for any reason

PA children are those that have missed 12 sessions, authorised and unauthorised, in any 12 school weeks. Each day consists of 2 sessions.

For any pupil who has missed a targeted number of sessions medical evidence will need to be provided for any absence.

Compliance with Somerset County Council's School Attendance Penalty Notices Protocol (Code of Conduct) effective from 01.10.2019

At St Bartholomew's school we try our very best to ensure that every pupil is successful. We seek to give our children Roots to Grow and Wings to Fly. Aspiration is one of our school values and central to this policy, in that we aspire for our children to regularly attend school to enable them to flourish. It

is well known that attainment is linked with attendance and all statistics show that pupils who attend regularly not only enjoy school life to the full but attain higher grades than those who don't attend regularly.

Our school are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to enable our children to achieve their very best in all aspects of school life. St Bartholomew's C of E First School work with parents to access Early Help and intervention to support families. This might include meetings with families, a referral to Team Around the School, the Parent and Family Support Advisers or other services that can help the family overcome barriers to good school attendance.

Parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their child and the Authority will take appropriate legal action in response to cases of poor attendance.

This may include us as a school:-

- issuing a Penalty Notice Warning Letter
- requesting:
 - Team Around the School (TAS) Referral
 - Fixed Penalty Notice (£60.00 fine per child per parent or carer)
 - Court Action for failure to secure regular school attendance.

Penalties may be requested and served to each parent/carers per child:

- where the pupil's absence, perhaps within a rolling academic year, has not been authorised by the school.
- where parents allow their child to be present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification during the first five days of a fixed period or permanent exclusion. (The parents must have been notified by the school at the time of the exclusion of this and the days to which it applies)
- where term-time leave of absence has not been authorised (authorised leave of absence to take family holidays can only be granted by the school in exceptional circumstances).

From September 2014 we have complied with County expectations by:

Continuing to be in line with the Crewkerne and Ilminster cluster of schools and the Local Authority by implementing penalty fines and warning penalty notices for unauthorised attendance which includes unauthorised holidays.

Within the local cluster of schools we have agreed the following:

- The Local Authority will issue families with a penalty fine of £60 per pupil, per parent where any child is absent from school for 10 consecutive unauthorised holiday sessions (5 days) and has had at least one other absence during the previous two terms – this includes **any** absence, authorised or unauthorised. This means that in the future, families can expect a fine of £60 per pupil, per parent for taking a holiday of a week or more. Please note these fines go to the Local Authority and not to the school. Children who are absent from school with illness for a week or more will not be fined. Where there are concerns regarding the length of absence, legitimacy or frequency is questioned then medical evidence will be sought to support the need for absence e.g. prescription, medicine label, appointment card, screen print from the surgery – please note we are not asking for a Doctor's certificate.
- We continue to follow Somerset County Council advice. Therefore we will still fine unauthorised consecutive absence of 10 holiday sessions or more where pupil's attendance falls below 90% (PA threshold).
- Children who have 10 or more unauthorised absences in any 12 week period may receive a penalty notice warning letter from the school. Children who receive a warning letter will be expected to attend school for a given number of weeks without any further absences –

otherwise a penalty fine will be incurred. Where a penalty warning notice letter is issued any illness absence must be accompanied by some form of medical evidence.

- There may be exceptional circumstances where leave is granted and these can be put in writing to the school using the 'Term Time Leave Request Form'. Where a family's children attend more than one school then these circumstances will be discussed with the other school and if required, advice sought from the Local Authority. Additional evidence may be asked for. Most requests for term time leave will be unauthorised unless evidence is provided to show that leave has to take place during term time (e.g. fixed events such as funerals or weddings, or due to work circumstances e.g. leave for forces families). Term time leave will not be authorised on the grounds of cost or where families give good reasons to have a holiday without justifying why the leave could not be taken at the next school holiday date. Where leave is granted for a fixed event (such as a wedding) whilst the school may authorise reasonable travel time, extended leave or holiday around the event will not necessarily be authorised.
- If you have a child attending another school in CISP (Crewkerne and Ilminster School Partnership) we will consult with that school if a request for absence is made. Please bear in mind that in certain circumstances e.g. poor attendance for one sibling, child in a National examination year, there may be a different decision made by the schools involved however in most cases schools will make the same judgements regarding absence.

At St Bartholomew's we also take lateness very seriously. Persistent lateness can become a problem, as vital information with regards to school work is usually given out at the beginning of lessons. Pupils arriving late can miss this which may have a negative effect on attainment. We do have a legal obligation to close the register after the first 30 minutes of morning and afternoon sessions. If your child is late by less than 30 minutes they will be given a late mark. If lateness becomes an issue, further action will be taken.

If a child is more than 30 minutes late for morning or afternoon sessions he/she will legally be considered as absent for part of that morning or afternoon session. Regular lateness of more than 30 minutes may therefore also result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued by the Authority and/or further legal action.