

Beech Green Primary School

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Reviewed Autumn 2013

1 RATIONALE

Good attendance has a significant part to play in ensuring that children make good progress in their learning. Data demonstrates that children with low attendance are at greater risk of under achievement and being vulnerable to exclusion. As a school that has high aspirations for all of its pupils Beech Green is committed to ensuring the best possible attendance for all children. “Reducing absence from school, especially persistent absence, serves to support – Raising standards, narrowing attainment gaps and safeguarding all children”. (DCSF letter to DCS, GCC, 24 August 2009)

2 AIMS

To maintain high levels of attendance throughout the school
To ensure all children reach their own potential academically and socially
To ensure all children are safe
To ensure all children enjoy their school experience
To encourage levels of attendance above the national average

3 PURPOSES

To review this policy annually
To promote LA and DFE initiatives and guidelines
To encourage all children to get to school on time
To maintain an accurate record of pupil’s attendance, lateness and absenteeism
To monitor attendance/lates
To liaise with the school’s Education Welfare Officer (EWO)
To inform parents of their child’s attendance
To produce statistical information as required by the LA or DFE
To provide information for staff and governors as required

4 DEFINITIONS

Low Attender - those pupils below 90% (LA)
Persistent Absentee – those pupils below 85% (PA)
Attendance Team:-
Headteacher
Attendance Officer (AO)
Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

5 PROCEDURES relevant to all pupils

1. Teachers or the relevant Teaching Assistant will log on to SIMs in the classroom and electronically mark the register twice daily. Morning registration will end at 9.00 a.m.
2. Teachers or the relevant Teaching Assistant will also mark the Dinner Registers on a paper copy and return them to the school office at the start of each day. These will be used in the event of a fire evacuation or practice!
3. Children arriving late (after 9.00 a.m.) will be sent to the school office for an electronic mark in SIMs and their dinner choice will be added to the paper dinner register. After 9 a.m. the L code (for authorised lateness) will be applied. Registers will close at 9.30 a.m., after which the U code (for unauthorised lateness) will be applied.
4. The AO will regularly check Registers have been marked properly and query with teachers any unusual 'patterns of marks' or inconsistencies.
5. Parents have a responsibility to inform the school if their child will not be attending before the start of the school day.
6. When a parent contacts the school to explain their child's absence a log is made in the office attendance absence diary.
7. Manual entry to SIMs attendance programme of reasons for absence, i.e. those in the attendance absence diary, will be made normally once a week by the AO.
8. Absence Return Forms, listing any unexplained absence, will be printed regularly, completed by teachers and returned to the office for entry into the Attendance programme on SIMs by the AO.
9. Letters to parents requesting unknown reasons for absence can be requested by teachers from the AO.
10. Notes from parents as to reasons for absence should be sent to the office at the end of each academic year, where they will be kept for 1 year.
11. The AT will review attendances frequently, and at least at the start of each term, to identify the LA and PA pupils and write to parents accordingly.
12. Teachers who are concerned about a child's attendance should inform the office/AO.
13. A letter will be issued to parents whose child arrives late to school repeatedly (i.e 10%).
14. If clear reasons for a child's continuing non-attendance are not forthcoming the EWO will be informed.
15. Children with unauthorised absence will be dealt with by the EWO who may refer to other agencies as appropriate.
16. Children who have been identified as LA or PA pupils and been referred to the EWO will have a personal record in the "Attendance" file.
17. Absence Report Forms will be kept for 3 years.
18. A paper copy of Registers will be kept.
19. Regular reminders on the importance of good attendance will be included in the school newsletters.
20. Good attendance will be recognised through a reward system (Appendix 1) and celebrated in assemblies.
21. Statistical information can be produced by the AO as requested.
22. Leavers' attendance records will be forwarded to the receiving school via a Common Transfer File within SIMs (CTF).
23. A 'Registration Certificate Report' will be included with the Annual Reports to parents, indicating child's percentage up to and including the last full week in June.

6 ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES relevant to Low Attenders (LA) and Persistent Absentees (PA)

1. Teachers should inform the office on the first day of any absence of any identified Low Attenders (LA) or Persistent Absentee (PA). Those families will be contacted if no reason for absence has already been given.
2. Lists of LA and PA pupils will be kept in the front of the dinner register file and be updated at the end of terms 3 and 6.
3. If there is an unexplained absence of more than two days of a pupil on a Child Protection Plan the teacher must inform the Child Protection Officer.
4. Children Missing Education – if a child remains off school with no known reason the EWO should contact the appropriate authorities to make a visit and establish safe whereabouts of the child. If it appears a child has left, but no school has made contact within 15 days, a CTF file should be sent to the missing children's site.
5. A letter will be issued to all parents of LA or PA children reminding them of the importance of good attendance and celebrating any improvements. A copy of this will be kept on file.
6. If there is no improvement in attendance and/or lates by the next review a second letter will be issued requesting a meeting between parents and Head to discuss the matter.
7. PAs will be picked up by the EWO at the regular monitoring visits. Any other concerns will be referred to the EWO as and when required.

7 HOLIDAYS TAKEN IN TERM TIME

*“Amendments have been made to the 2006 regulations in the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) (2013). The amendments, which came into force on 1 September 2013, make it clear that headteachers may **not** now grant any leave of absence during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances.”*

1. In line with these amendments parents have been informed that holiday requests will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances, which should be made in writing well in advance of the dates requested setting out the exceptional circumstance of the holiday.

8 ISSUING OF A PENALTY NOTICE

“Penalty Notice Request (section 444 Education Act 1996) – the headteacher may request a penalty notice for any registered pupil at Beech Green who has at least 10 unauthorised absences in a period not exceeding 13 weeks (to include school holidays).”

ATTENDANCE REWARDS

Start of each term (for results of the previous term for terms 1-5 only)

- 100% attendance = gold sticker
- 1 day's absence (or 2 sessions) = silver sticker
- 2 days absence (or 4 sessions) = bronze sticker

to be recorded on individual pupil attendance record card, by the teachers. Information on who has achieved what will be provided at the start of each term (for the previous term) by the AO.

Termly Celebration Assembly of each term

- will recognise 100% attendance for the previous term.

End of each academic year in an Attendance Assembly

- children with 100% attendance for the year (up to and including the last full week in June) will be awarded a 100% attendance certificate. Children need to have attended for the whole year.
- the class with the highest percentage attendance for the year (up to and including the last full week in June) will be awarded the 'Class Attendance Shield'.
- children with 98+% attendance (up to and including the last full week in June) will be entered for a year group draw to win a £15 gift voucher. Children need to have attended for the whole year.
- Y6 children leaving – their attendance will be checked to see if anyone has 100% for each of their seven years at Beech Green – in which case The Beech Green Lifetime 100% Attendance Award would be given together with a gift voucher of an appropriate amount.

Information on who has achieved what will be provided as soon as possible after the last full week in June, by the AO.

Next to be reviewed – Autumn 2015