

# Burton Salmon Community Primary School

## **Attendance Policy**

At Burton Salmon Community Primary School we expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy, secure and caring environment for all children in our care. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

### **Authorised absence**

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### **Unauthorised absence**

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

### **If a child is absent**

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, and will inform the school admin assistant, who will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

When the child returns to school, a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence, unless the school has already been informed. A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.

### **Requests for leave of absence**

At Burton Salmon Community Primary School we believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance, normally this request will be granted. Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from school for up to ten days for an annual holiday. We naturally prefer parents to take their family holiday in the normal school holiday periods, but if this is not possible the school will, of course, grant the leave of absence.

If a parent/guardian wishes to withdraw their child from school then a holiday request form needs to be completed by the parent/guardian. The request for withdrawal has then to be authorised by the Headteacher and a signed form will be returned to the parent/guardian.

**Long-term absence**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school, where appropriate, will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.

If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

**Repeated unauthorised absences**

The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LEA support services, who will visit the home and seek to ensure that the parents or guardians understand the seriousness of the situation.

The governors, supported by the LEA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

**Attendance targets**

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the Headteacher and governors at the annual target-setting meetings. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LEA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

**Monitoring and review**

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

**(Signature)**\_\_\_\_\_ **(Head Teacher)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Date)**

**(Signature)**\_\_\_\_\_ **(Chair of Governors)** \_\_\_\_\_ **(Date)**