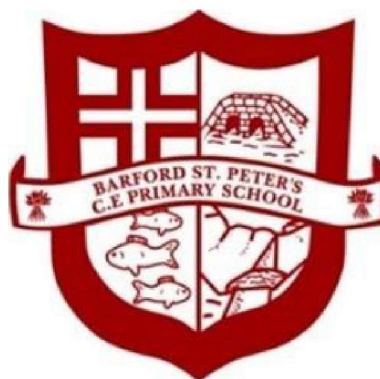


Barford St. Peter's C.E. (V.A.) Primary School

Together we love; together we learn



Attendance Policy

Date reviewed: November 2025

Review date: November 2026

Aims

At Barford St. Peter's Primary School we are committed to working with parents, carers and families to ensure children are able to meet their full potential. As such, we are rigorous in ensuring that every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled and children maintain the highest levels of attendance at school.

This policy outlines how we will work with families to:

- > Promote excellent attendance
- > Reduce absence, including persistent and severe absence
- > Act early to address patterns of absence
- > Promote and support punctuality

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [Working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE 2024), 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:

- > Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- > Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- > Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- > [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006 \(and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments\)](#)
- > [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.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- > Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- > Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- > Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- > Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- > Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- > Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- > Implementation of this policy at the school
- > Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- > Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- > Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- > Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- > Issuing letters to parents where attendance is less than 90%
- > Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

The designated safeguarding leaders

The designated safeguarding leaders are responsible for:

- > Working with families for whom attendance is less than 90%
- > Working with families who have poor punctuality
- > Together with the head teacher, regularly reviewing attendance data
- > Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- > Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence

The designated safeguarding leaders responsible for attendance are Aisha Richards and Lucy Rose and can be contacted via 01926 624244 or admin3587@welearn365.com

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office twice per day (during morning registration and afternoon registration).

Office staff

Office staff will:

- > Take calls and emails from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record the reason for absence on the school system.
- > Transfer calls or emails from parents to the teachers regarding absence.
- > For children whose attendance is less than 90% and under monitoring, refer all phone calls and emails regarding absence to the head teacher.

Parents/ carers

Parents/ carers are expected to:

- > Make sure their child attends school every day, on time.
- > Not take their children out of school during term time for family events or holidays.
- > Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return.
- > Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child.
- > Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- > Attend school every day on time

Recording attendance

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- > Present
- > Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- > Absent
- > Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will also record:

- > Whether the absence is authorised or not
- > The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- > The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive in school by 8.45am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 8.45am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1pm.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school on 01926 624244 or emailing admin3587@welearn365.com

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, 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/carers will be notified of this in advance.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. However, we encourage parents/carers 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.

The pupil's parent/carer must apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence through use of a green form which is available from the school office.

Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late must sign in using the electronic system in the school office, citing the reason for their lateness. Children arriving late will be marked as late using the appropriate code in the register.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- > Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact the police or Warwickshire children's services if there is a safeguarding concern for the child's welfare.
- > Identify whether the absence is approved or not.
- > Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained (this will be no later than 5 working days after the session.)
- > Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The law states a leave of absence may only be granted by a school if an application is made in advance and if it considers there are exceptional circumstances relating to the application. Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- > Illness and medical/dental appointments
- > Religious observance - where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- > Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes - this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision.

A leave of absence is granted entirely at the school's discretion. Permission for a Leave of Absence from a school may only be given by the headteacher.

- Schools must judge each application individually considering the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind each request.
- A need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation would not constitute an exceptional circumstance.
- Where a leave of absence is granted, the school will determine the number of days a pupil can be absent from school.
- When making an application for Leave of Absence parents are advised to give sufficient information and time to allow the Head teacher the opportunity to consider all the exceptional circumstances and to notify the parents of their decision. The school may also request further information on the application and supporting documentation where appropriate.
- It is advised that if the resident parent has not received notification or a response regarding the leave of absence application, it is their responsibility to ascertain if the leave is authorised prior to the start of the leave.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Where applications for Leave of Absences are made in advance and refused, the child is expected to be in school on the dates set out in the application. If the child is absent during that period, it will be recorded as an "unauthorised" absence. Where a leave of absence is requested but additional days are taken either prior to or after the request, they may be considered as part of the leave of absence.
- Leave of Absences which are not made in advance cannot be authorised in line with legislation. This will result in the absence being recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council. Penalty notices are issued in accordance with Warwickshire County Council's Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices and in the first instance, as an alternative to prosecution proceedings.
- Where a Penalty Notice is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Leave of Absence taken in the academic year 2024-25

The law relating to Penalty Notices changed with effect from 19 August 2024. Therefore, Penalty Notices issued for Leave of Absence taken from September 2024 will be issued in accordance with the updated legislation.

Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

- **First Leave of Absence Offence:** The amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.
- **Second Leave of Absence Offence** within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.
- **Third Leave of Absence offence** within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice). A Penalty Notice will not be issued and the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

Attendance monitoring

Attendance will be monitored by the head teacher every half term using a staged process.

Stage One

Children whose attendance has fallen below 95% will be highlighted and a letter sent to parents explaining that their child's attendance has fallen below acceptable levels. Support will be offered to families at this stage to help improve attendance.

Stage Two

If a letter has previously been issued to parents at stage one, and attendance has not improved, they will be asked to meet with the head teacher to discuss how to improve attendance.

Stage Three

If attendance does not improve during stages one and two, the head teacher will alert governors and make a referral to Warwickshire attendance service.

Children whose families are part of the early help process will be supported with attendance through this process by a designated safeguarding lead.

Pupil-level absence data will be 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. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually by the head teacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing body.