



Attendance Policy 2024: Summary for Parents



From September 2024, schools need to have a clear attendance policy following the new DfE guidance document 'Working together to Improve School Attendance'.



Why does attendance matter?

School gives children the **life skills to prepare them for the future.**

They make friends, **learn about themselves and their bodies** and **how to build relationships**

They learn **fundamental skills in English & Maths** as well as **learning about the wider world.**

We help them to grow in faith, grow in their learning and grow our future world.

When children miss school:

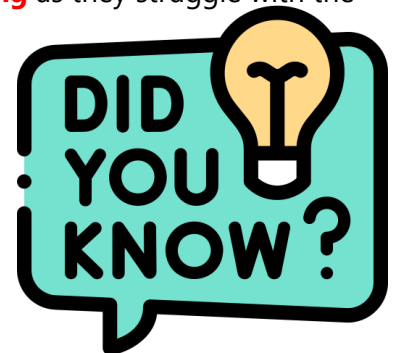
* They **miss 5 lessons per day.** They then feel lost and confused when they return to school because they have missed key information and this gets worse given the length of absence. If a child misses **10 days of school** in a year, they are missing **50 lessons** and this causes significant gaps in their learning. Some topics are not repeated leading to **knowledge gaps** in subjects in future years.

* They **miss out on fundamental reading, writing and maths skills** and are more likely to fall behind. Children with poor attendance are more likely to not be working at the expected level for their age. They are more likely to **underachieve** in their standard primary school tests and this continues to **impact** their GCSEs and **further education.**

* They develop a **habit** of missing school which can be **difficult** to turn around.

* They may struggle with **anxiety, their mental health, and wellbeing** as they struggle with the return to school.

All children have a legal right to a full-time education. It is the legal responsibility of every parent/carer to make sure their child receives that education.



Where parents decide to have their children registered at a school, **they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends the school regularly.**

Therefore, we have 3 expectations for all children and families in our school:



Attend school daily

Attend school on time = 8.50 am

Attend school ready and prepared to learn

****Uniform/PE kit** **water bottle/lunch box****

**** Reading diary****



The School Day - The gates open at **8.40am** each morning

The school day starts at **8.50am** and all children must be in their classrooms by this time ready for the register. **The school day ends at 3.20pm**

Reporting your child absent

It is the **parent/carer's responsibility** to inform the school when their child is absent. All parents **must call the school between 8am and 9am on 01359 221 297** to report their child's non-attendance for **every day of absence**, and to explain the **reasons** for their absence.



Medical Appointments



All medical appointments should be made outside of school hours. On the rare occasion where this is not possible, for example a child needs to attend a specialist centre at a given time, **parents must complete a 'leave of absence' request.** A form for this can be collected from the school office. The child should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Requesting Other Leaves of Absence in Advance

- * Headteachers can only grant leaves of absence in **exceptional** circumstances, **it is highly unlikely a leave of absence will be granted for the purposes of a family holiday.**
- * In the **exceptional case** where families know in advance of a reason why their child may not be able to attend school, **they must request a 'Leave of Absence' form from the school office.** This must be **completed**, detailing the reasons. **Only exceptional circumstances warrant a leave of absence.**
- * If **granted**, it is for the Headteacher to decide the **length of time** a pupil can be away from school. Parents will be notified of this in **writing**.
- * If **rejected**, and parents decide to not bring their child to school **this absence will be marked as unauthorised. This could lead to a Fixed Penalty Notice.**

Fixed Penalty Notices ***Changes from 2024***

The law states that **if children of compulsory school age are absent from school without good reason they are committing an offence** and their parents or carers may be prosecuted in the Magistrate's Court.

There is now a single, consistent, national threshold for when a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued for all schools in England. This Threshold is **10 sessions (equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence** within a rolling 10 school week period. **Fixed Penalty Notices will be used when:**

- Regular **unauthorised absence** from school has occurred, **this can include being persistently late.**
- **One off instances of irregular attendance** where leave has been taken during term time without the permission of the school.
- This **includes unauthorised family holidays during term time.**

1st Offence: £160 per parent, per child (reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days)

2nd Offence: £160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days

3rd Offence within 3 years: **Case could be presented straight to Magistrate Court with fines up to £2500**



How will the school work with families to improve attendance?



The diagram below outlines the key ways that staff will work with families when supporting them with attendance. When discussing attendance with families, staff will use this document to outline what next steps will happen to work with and support the child and the family.

At Barningham CEVC Primary School, we aim to listen, understand and support our families but not tolerate high levels of absenteeism

Number of days absent	Attendance Percentage	Impact	School Actions
0-2 days absent in a school year	99% to 100%	<p>Attendance Levels are Excellent</p> <p>Your child is accessing all learning opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Celebrate strong attendance during Collective Worship - Awards for pupils and classes
2.5-9 days absent in a school year	96% to 98%	<p>Attendance levels are Good</p> <p>Your child has missed very few learning opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Termly update for parents
9.5-17 days absent in a school year	93% to 95%	<p>Attendance levels are Unsatisfactory</p> <p>Your child is at risk of underachieving due to missed learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance letter sent home - Weekly family check-in by member of staff - Attendance monitored
18-25 days absent in a school year	90% to 92%	<p>Attendance levels are Poor</p> <p>Your child is at risk of high underachievement due to missed learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance letter sent home - Attendance support meeting for family - Weekly family check-in by member of staff - Identify support for pupil and family to improve attendance
Over 25 days absent in a school year	Below 90%	<p>Attendance levels are Inadequate</p> <p>Your child is at risk of serious underachievement and is now considered persistently absent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attendance letter sent home - Attendance support meeting for family - Family allocated one member of staff to support with improving attendance - Daily check-in by member of staff - Family action plan to be considered if necessary

To read our attendance policy in full, please click here:

<https://www.barningham.suffolk.sch.uk/attendance-parents>

Penalty Notice Fines for School Attendance are changing from 19th August 2024

With the introduction of the new National Framework for Penalty Notices issued by DfE, the following changes will come into force for School Penalty Notice Fines issued after 19th August 2024.

National Threshold

There will be a single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered by all schools in England of 10 sessions (usually equivalent to 5 school days) of unauthorised absence within a rolling 10 school week period.

These sessions do not have to be consecutive and can be made up of a combination of any type of unauthorised absence.

The 10-school week period can span different terms or school years.

Please note: The DfE does not consider a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation to be an exceptional circumstance.

First Offence

The first time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.

Reduced to £80 per parent, per child if paid within 21 days.



Second Offence (within 3 years)

The Second time a Penalty Notice is issued for unauthorised absence the amount will be:

£160 per parent, per child paid within 28 days.



Third Offence and Any Further Offences (within 3 years)

The third time an offence is committed a Penalty Notice will not be issued and the case could be presented straight to the Magistrate's Court. Prosecution can result in Criminal records and fines of up to £2,500

Cases found guilty in Magistrates' Court may show on the parent's future DBS certificate due to 'failure to safeguard a child's education'.

Per Parent*, Per Child

Penalty Notice Fines are issued to each parent*, for each child that was absent.

For example: 3 siblings absent for term time leave, would result in each parent receiving 3 separate fines.

*Parent

Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines "parent" as:

- All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person.
- Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.