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**Bispham Drive**  
Junior School  
*Ad esse optimum*

# **Bispham Drive Junior School**

## **Attendance Policy**

### **2024/2025**

**This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.**

**This policy has been created in line with new guidance KCSIE 2024**

**Agreed by governing body - October 2024**

**Review - October 2025**

## **1. Aims**

Bispham Drive Junior School is committed to fulfilling our obligation to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values and understands the importance of good attendance – high achievement depends on good attendance.

This includes:

- promoting good attendance;
- reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence;
- ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled;
- acting early to address patterns of absence and;
- building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend the school.

Whilst we will apply our policy fairly and consistently, we will also ensure that we consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance.

## **2. Legislation and Guidance**

This policy meets the requirements of Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024) published by the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on School Attendance Parental Responsibility Measures (2015). 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.

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **3.1 The school and its Governing Body**

The school and its Governing Body, is responsible for:

- promoting the importance of attendance across the school's policies and ethos;
- making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties;
- regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data;
- discuss and challenge trends to help school leaders focus improvement efforts;
- 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 and;
- share effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.

### **3.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- the 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 and;
- issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

### **3.3 The senior staff member responsible for attendance**

The senior staff member for attendance is responsible for embedding Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024) through:

- leading and championing attendance across the school;
- offering a clear vision for attendance improvement;
- evaluating and monitoring expectations, progress and processes, including the efficacy of strategies and processes;
- having an oversight of data analysis;
- devising and implementing specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data;
- arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues;
- delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families and;
- establish and maintain effective systems for tackling absence and make sure they are followed by all staff.

The staff member responsible for attendance is Andrea Goetzee and she can be contacted by telephone on 0115 9137447 or email on [parentqueries@bipshamdrive.net](mailto:parentqueries@bipshamdrive.net).

### **3.4 The Attendance Officers**

The school Attendance Officer is responsible for:

- monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7);
- benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement;
- providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Senior Leader responsible for attendance and the Headteacher;
- working with school partners, the Local Authority and Education Welfare Officers to tackle persistent absence and;
- advising the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

At Bispham Drive Junior School the Attendance Office is Mel Deoswijk and she can be contacted by telephone on 0115 9137447 or email on [parentqueries@bipshamdrive.net](mailto:parentqueries@bipshamdrive.net).

### **3.5 Teachers**

Teachers are responsible for:

- recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. This must be done on the same day and by 9am for the morning sessions and by 1.30pm for the afternoon sessions.
- attending training and CPD, as needed and appropriate;
- being aware of the importance of good attendance, and;
- ensuring they are consistent in their communication with pupils and parents.

### **3.6 School Administration Staff**

School administration staff will:

- take calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school Management Information Systems.
- make absence calls daily for children not in attendance if reason is unknown;
- highlight multiple absences to the teacher, Headteacher and Attendance Officer in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance, as appropriate.

### **3.7 Parents/Carers**

Parents/Carers are expected to:

- make sure their child attends every statutory school day and on time;
- call the school to report their child's absence before 8.55am 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 and;
- ensure children are collected on time at the end of the school day at 3.30pm;
- ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day.
- Only request leave of absences in exceptional circumstances and do so in advance via school processes (see section 5.1)
- engage positively with the school to identify and support any identified barriers to attendance. All absences can be reported by calling the school on 0115 9137447

## **4. Recording Attendance**

### **4.1 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, or;

- unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. (See Appendix 1 for more details on the DfE attendance codes.)

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- the original entry;
- the amended entry;
- the reason for the amendment;
- the date on which the amendment was made and;
- the name and position of the person who made the amendment.

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, or;
- 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 6 years after the date on which the entry was made. Pupils must arrive at the school by 8.55am on each school day. The register for the first session will be taken at 9.00 am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.20pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

## **4.2 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 8.55am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff (see also section 7).

- By calling and speaking to a member of our school administration staff; or
- By leaving a full and detailed message containing the child's name, the name of the parent/carer leaving the message, the time of the message and the reason for the child's absence/lateness, with an anticipated arrival time.

Parents/carers must NOT notify our school of their child's absence (unplanned or planned) using email. 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 or there are concerns about persistent absence, 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.

### 4.3 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.

Parents are asked to complete an application form for Leave of Absence, if they wish to take their child out of our school for an appointment, visit or holiday. This needs to be returned either by hand to one of our school administration Team or by email using [parentqueries@bisphamdrive.net](mailto:parentqueries@bisphamdrive.net)

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 the school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

### 4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed (9.10am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code (L).
- After the register has closed (after 9.10am) will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code (U). This will impact on the child's overall attendance.

Every child, who arrives late, must be accompanied by their parent/carer (if their parent/carer brought them) to our School Office if they arrive after 9.00 am to ensure:

- they arrive safely in our school;
- 
- that the reason for lateness is explained by their accompanying adult/carer, rather than the child/ren themselves; and
- enable their presence in our school to be recorded.

Those children who are not brought to our school by their parent/carer are expected to be on time (in their classroom by 8.55am) at the beginning of our school day.

If any child arrives after 9.10am or 1.30pm, their lateness is classed as unauthorised and impacts on their overall attendance percentage.

Our school will respond to ongoing punctuality issues as follows:

- Parents/carers will be notified if their child is frequently late if the child travels to school without an adult.
- A telephone call will be made to the parent / carer for an explanation if they are not accompanied. To avoid this inconvenience, please ensure your child is on time.
- A letter will be sent home to the parent/carer if your child is late 3 times in any half-term period.
- Our school may involve our Behaviour and Attendance Lead and a meeting will be offered to the parent/carer to discuss how our school may support with ensuring that your child is brought to/arrives at our school on time.
- In cases where parents are persistently late bringing their child to school or collecting their child from school, our school will consider involving an Education Welfare Officer who may then contact the family to discuss the issues.
- If the intervention by an Education Welfare Officer does not resolve the difficulties, our school will consider making a referral to Social Services. An attendance book is kept in our School Office to record any

attendance telephone messages. Education Welfare Officers will carry out unannounced inspections to check children are arriving on time.

#### **4.5 Following-up Unexplained Absence**

Where any pupil we expect to attend the 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 conduct a home visit and/or contact the police and/or social care depending on the individual circumstances of the child;

Where any pupil is considered vulnerable or 'at risk' for any reason, our school will:

- notify one of our Designated Safeguarding Leads on the first day as soon as possible
- call the child's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason

For either of the above unexplained absences, our school will also:

- 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 and;
- 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 follow Nottinghamshire local authority procedures which may include involving an Education Welfare Officer or other relevant supportive agencies.
- where a child has support from additional agencies, the school may liaise with relevant professionals to promote effective working across the local authority area. All decisions around information sharing will be recorded on CPOMS following Safeguarding Child Protection Policy procedures.

#### **4.6 Reporting to Parents/Carers**

Our school will, via half-termly written reports, inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels:

- on the last Monday of each half-term;
- at each Parents' Evenings in Autumn and Spring Terms; and
- with your child's end-of-year report in the Summer Term.

### **5. Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

#### **5.1 Approval for Term-time Absence**

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as circumstances that could not be reasonably foreseen and for which there was insufficient time to take the necessary action to resolve the situation arising from those circumstances.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 2 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form available from the school office. The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for authorised absence include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where a day is “exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil’s parents belong” (The Education Act 1996 S444(3) (c)). 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.

When considering granting the leave of absence as exceptional circumstance the Headteacher will consider:

- the amount of time requested;
- circumstances of the request;
- frequency of the request;
- previous leave of absences taken within child’s school career;
- when the request was made;
- proximity of external and internal examinations;
- the child’s current attendance record, including previous academic years;
- the impact that absence will have on a child’s attendance record;
- the impact on the child’s education and their ability to catch up on the work that would be missed.

## 5.2 Legal Sanctions

Bispham Drive Junior School or the Local Authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from the school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

Penalty notices can be issued by a Headteacher, Local Authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- the threshold of 10 (5 days) sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of ten school weeks;
  - one-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission, and;
  - where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason. Under national framework for penalty notices, from Working Together to Improve School Attendance (2024), our school is required to consider issuing a fine when;
- **a child has missed 10 or more sessions (5 or more consecutive days) for unauthorised reasons**
  - **10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10-week period**



If issued with an initial fine, or penalty notice, each parent **must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 within 28 days**. The payment must be made directly to the Local Authority.

If the same parent, for the same child is issued with a **second fine, or penalty notice, within a 3-year rolling period**, the parent will be charged at a flat rate of **£160 if paid within 28 days**.

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the Local Authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

If the same parent, for the same child triggers a further penalty notice, alternative action will be explored. This may include considering prosecution but may include other tools such as another attendance legal intervention.

## **6. Attendance Monitoring**

Our school monitors and analyses attendance and absence data to identify children or cohorts that require support with their attendance. The following illustrates strategies and ways in which we do this:

- Our school Attendance Officer provides weekly reports for our Headteacher detailing children with attendance below 90% including those children who arrive at or are collected late from our school with reasons for absences/lateness;
- Attendance data discussed at fortnightly Senior Leadership
- Half termly attendance reports/information shared at Governors' meetings;
- Meetings with our Senco and parents/carers of our children with SEND for consideration of changes to a child's timetable to support with their attendance at our school;
- Letters home addressing concerns concerning levels of attendance, lateness and punctuality;
- Meetings with our parents/carers and their child (if appropriate)/home visits to discuss reasons for nonattendance/poor attendance or issues with lateness/punctuality;
- Wellbeing support offered to all our children – this may be through: in-class support provided by our teachers and teaching assistants; weekly support via our ELSA's; the involvement of external agencies such as healthy families or CAMHs; support for our families eligible for Free School Meals for example places at our Breakfast Club and AfterSchool Club;
- Support for our children with 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL) for example through a 'buddy system' and for their parents by signposting them to community groups/local Nottinghamshire organisations and introducing them to other families of children in our school to help with transitioning into Nottinghamshire and into our school;
- Referrals and liaison with outside agencies including the Healthy Family Team/Family Services through an early help assessment form (EHAF)/the Child Missing Education Officer/Education Welfare Officers

### **6.1 Monitoring attendance**

Bispham Drive Junior School will:

- monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level and;
- identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be shared daily with the DfE through approved MIS systems, in line with Working Together to Improve Attendance (2024) 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 Body.

## **6.2 Analysing attendance**

Bispham Drive Junior School will ensure that internal processes allow for:

- analysis of attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families, and;
- looking at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns.

Where required, the school will work actively with the local authority Education Welfare Team to monitor, identify and support any concerns around child attendance.

When working with the local authority, our school will;

- build strong relationships and work collaboratively
- identify, discuss, and agree action plans and joint approaches for severely absent pupils (where they do not already have a plan in place)
- discuss and agree approaches for persistently absent, where there have barriers to attendance that require a multi-agency response to overcome
- agree which agency will act as lead practitioner

## **6.3 Using data to improve attendance**

Bispham Drive Junior School will:

- provide regular attendance reports to teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families and;
- use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.

## **6.4 Reducing Persistent and Severe Absence**

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe persistent absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

Bispham Drive Junior School will:

- use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence;
- work with identified children and parents to understand and support reasons for absence, including any in-school barriers to attendance;

- signpost and support access to any required services where external barriers to school are identified;
- hold regular discussions with children and their parents, who the school (and/or Local Authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement;
- provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance and;
- consider thresholds for referral to statutory children’s agencies.
- Send letters and/or host meetings with parents/carers

## 7. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the Local Authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum annually.

## 8. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy

### Appendix 1 Attendance Codes

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
K	Attending education provision arranged by local authority	Pupil is attending a place, other than the school or any other school at which they are a registered pupil
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Authorised Absence		
Code	Definition	Scenario
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
C1	Participating in a regulated performance or undertaking regulated employment abroad	Pupil has been granted leave for the purpose of participating in a regulated performance or work abroad
C2	Part time timetable	Pupil is subject to a part time timetable
J1	Interview	Pupil has an interview with prospective employer/educational establishment
E	Suspended or permanently excluded	Pupil has been suspended or permanently excluded but no alternative provision has been made
I	Illness	The school has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness (not medical appointments)
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

Unauthorised Absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after no more than 5 school days)
O	Unauthorised absence	The school is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence, or no reason has been provided

U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at the school after the register closed
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Code	Definition	Scenario
Q	Lack of access arrangements	Pupil unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements put in place by local authority
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y1	No transport provided	Pupil is unable to attend due to transport normally provided by school or local authority is not available
Y2	Widespread disruption to travel	Pupil is unable to travel due to disruption to travel in a local, national or international emergency
Y3	School is partly closed	Pupil cannot attend due to part of the school premises being closed and is not practicably able to accommodate in areas which remain open
Y4	Whole school is closed	Pupil cannot attend due to the school premises being closed unexpectedly eg, due to adverse weather conditions
Y5	Criminal justice detention	Pupil is unable to attend due to being in police detention/youth detention awaiting sentence/detained under sentence detention
Y6	Public Health guidance or law	Pupil cannot travel or attend school as this would be contrary to published guidance by Secretary of State for Health and Social Care or any legislation relating to transmission of infection or disease
Y7	Other unavoidable cause	Pupil has been affected by an unavoidable emergency that has prevented the pupil from attending a session
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half term/bank holiday/INSET day/academy used for polling