Burlington Infant School

Attendance Policy

Date:	**March 2025**
Date Due for Review	**March 2027**
Approved By:	**Full Governing Body**

Burlington Infant School

Attendance Policy
"Always do your best and be your best"

Aims

Burlington Infant School is fully committed to providing a full, broad and balanced education for every child who attends our school. We strongly believe in the importance of establishing a regular pattern of attendance and punctuality from as early on in school life as possible.

We will do all we can to ensure that all pupils attend school every day and that any barriers which prevent this are identified and acted upon as soon as possible through a robust system of monitoring and support.

We will make every effort to work together with parents and carers to provide the best opportunities for every child to achieve their potential by ensuring their good attendance and punctuality at school.

Expectations

At Burlington Infant School we expect all children to:

- Attend school regularly
- Arrive at school on time, ready to learn and well prepared for the day

At Burlington Infant School we expect all parents and carers to be aware of their legal responsibilities and to:

- Positively and actively encourage their child to attend school every day
- Ensure that their child arrives at school punctually
- Have routines in place at home to support and promote punctuality and attendance

- Contact the school by 9.30 am the same day when their child is unable to attend
- Contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school
- Ensure that the school has up to date contact numbers and emergency details
- Help their child by ensuring they have completed their homework and have all of the necessary equipment and resources to succeed at school
- Arrange for holidays to be taken in school holidays and NOT in term time
- Contact school to discuss any problems which may arise and be preventing their child attending school regularly

Attendance Targets

It is a school priority to encourage good attendance from all pupils. Every child should aim for 100% attendance.

The national expected attendance level is 96%. The table below explains how many days missed per year will affect the percentage attendance:

Attendance	Days missed during an academic year
100%	0 days
96%	8 days
90% **Anything below this level and a child is a Persistent Absentee.**	19 days *(equivalent to one day a fortnight being missed)*
85%	28.5 days
80%	38 days

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Burlington Infant School will promote, encourage and support good attendance whilst challenging non-attendance by:

- Prioritising good attendance in parents meetings, school publications, newsletters, assemblies and on school website and Facebook/Twitter pages
- Providing a safe, welcoming atmosphere for children
- Providing a positive learning environment and a caring, nurturing ethos
- Responding promptly to any concerns by a child or parent about the school or other pupils
- Celebrating good and improved attendance
- Rewarding good attendance with certificates for the class with the best weekly attendance alongside 'Mark' the Attendance Bear
- Awarding individual certificates to pupils with 100% attendance for full academic year
- Implementing a detailed Attendance Action Plan
- By marking registers accurately and punctually, twice a day during morning and afternoon registration
- Monitoring every pupil's attendance
- Encouraging parents to actively contact school on the first morning in the event of their child's absence
- Contacting parents as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence
- Following up all unexplained absences to obtain notes authorising the absence
- Making initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly, expressing concern and clarifying the school's and the Local Authority's expectations with regard to regular school attendance
- Referring to the Education Welfare Service where applicable
- Providing Local Authority leaflets on attendance and signposting parents to other agencies for support if necessary
- Contacting the Safeguarding and Partnership Hub if there are safeguarding concerns about a pupil's absence
- Recording attendance on Annual Reports for pupils
- Collecting data on attendance for the whole school, and for groups of pupils, analysing and benchmarking this against national data and making it available to governors and parents

Punctuality

The school doors open at **8.50am** and school starts for the day at **9.00am**. The afternoon session starts at **1.15pm**.

- Registers are kept open for 60 minutes at the beginning of the day and 30 minutes for the afternoon session
- If a pupil arrives late and the register is still open, the child will receive a 'late' mark but be counted as present
- If a child arrives after the register has closed and a satisfactory explanation is provided, they will be marked as 'authorised absent' for that session
- If no satisfactory explanation is given, they will be marked as 'unauthorised absent' for that session

The school will contact the parents of persistently late children by letter or by a visit from the Education Welfare Officer.

Acceptable Reasons for Absence

At Burlington Infant School we classify the following as acceptable reasons for absence:

- Medical Appointments - only when appointments cannot be obtained before or after school or in the holidays.
- Illness
- Bereavement

At Burlington Infant School we classify the following as unacceptable reasons for absence:

- Birthdays
- Parental illness
- Shopping trips
- Booking holidays during term time
- Extended holidays to visit family abroad

Holidays in Term Time

At Burlington Infant School, school term dates are published at least a year in advance and family holidays must be taken during school holidays. There is no legal entitlement for children to be absent from school for holidays during the academic year. Headteachers are no longer able to authorise any term time holidays and

therefore all holiday requests will be unauthorised absence. The school follows the Local Authority's policy and initiates fixed-priced fines for parents who take term time holidays of 10 sessions or more.

If parents believe that they have special circumstances, then they must seek permission from the school in advance following the school procedures.

Parents must complete an 'Absence from School for Exceptional Circumstances' form and return it to the school office for consideration by the Headteacher.

Responding to non-attendance

When a pupil fails to attend without a satisfactory explanation, we will:

- Contact the parent on the first day of absence by telephone during the morning session
- If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer
- A letter will be sent to the parent/carer if there is no explanation for the absence
- A home visit may be made if there is no response and the unauthorised absence has exceeded 3 school days, without any contact
- We will make a courtesy call 3 days after an authorised absence to see how your child is doing and when we can expect them back in school

The return to school, and the re-integration, of a pupil who returns to school after a lengthy absence may require special planning. The Headteacher or Special Education Needs Co-ordinator, (SENCO), will be responsible for deciding upon the programme for return and for the management of the programme. In collaboration with the parent/carer, programmes will be tailored to individual needs and may involve phased, part-time re-entry with support in lessons, as appropriate.

Authorised Absence

Only the school can authorise an absence. The fact that a parent has provided a note or other explanation (telephone call or personal contact) in relation to a particular absence does not oblige the school to accept the explanation offered as a valid reason for absence. Absence should be authorised if:

- The pupil is absent with leave (defined as 'leave granted by any person authorised to do so by the governing body or proprietor of the school')
- The pupil is ill or prevented from attending by an unavoidable cause
- The absence occurs on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parent belongs
- The pupil is the child of Traveller parents who temporarily leave the area giving reasonable indication of their intention to return
- There is a family bereavement
- The pupil is involved in an exceptional special occasion e.g. a family wedding. In authorising such absences the individual circumstances of the particular case and the pupil's overall pattern of attendance should be considered

Unauthorised Absence

- No explanation is forthcoming from the parent
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The pupil is absent for unexceptional special occasions e.g. the pupil's birthday
- The pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval on their return.

Changing schools

It is important that if families decide to send the child/children in their care to a different school that they inform school as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from the school roll until the following information has been received and investigated:

- The date the pupil will be leaving this school and starting the next
- The address of the new school
- The new home address, if it is known

The pupil's school records will then be sent on to the new school as soon as possible. In the event that the school has not been informed of the above information, the family will be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

Children Missing Education

Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible to identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. All schools must inform the local authority of any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

Burlington Infant School: Attendance Policy

Organisation
In order for this policy to be successful, every member of staff must make attendance a high priority and convey to the pupils the importance of the education being provided.

Governors

- Ensure that the school has in place a whole school Attendance Policy.
- Receive termly reports from the Headteacher in respect of attendance data and analyse any trends in absence.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the whole school policy.

Headteacher

- Oversees the whole policy.
- Has particular regard to the equalities aspect of the policies as they pertain to gender and ethnicity and to vulnerable pupils and those pupils looked after in care
- Report to Governors on attendance issues on a termly basis.
- Ensure liaisons with the link EWO.
- Ensure that the registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided

School Business Manager and Parent and Pupil Support Worker

- Initiate a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence
- Ensure that key office staff have time for liaison and follow-up work with the EWO and appropriate access to attendance data
- Consult and liaise closely with the EWO on a regular basis and take responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay
- Liaise closely with parents of pupils classed as Persistent Absentees and provide support and challenge as necessary
- To work in close collaboration with the EWO during their termly/half termly register analysis
- Set whole school attendance targets
- Monitor and evaluate attendance with the EWO

Class Teachers and Cover Supervisors

- To complete registers accurately and on time, twice daily
- To pass on to the office staff any verbal or written reasons for non-attendance
- To record all reasons for absences in the register
- Follow up immediately any unexplained non-attendance by liaising with the School Business Manager
- Inform the Headteacher/School Business Manager of any concerns.