

Attendance Policy

including EYFS

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Introduction

Regular and punctual school attendance is important. Pupils need to attend school regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them by law. Buttercup Primary School fully recognises its responsibilities to ensure pupils are in school and on time, therefore having access to learning for the maximum number of days and hours.

Our policy applies to all children registered at this school and this policy is made available to all parents/carers of pupils who are registered at our school on our school website.

This policy has been written to adhere to the relevant Children Acts, Education Acts, Regulations and Guidance from the Department for Education in addition to guidance from Tower hamlets Local Authority.

Although parents/carers have the legal responsibility for ensuring their child’s good attendance, the Headteacher and Proprietors at our school work together with other professionals to ensure that all pupils are encouraged and supported to develop good attendance habits. Procedures in this policy are followed to ensure this happens.

Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning .Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations. A child whose attendance drops to 90% each year will, over their time at primary school, have missed two whole terms of learning.

Aims and Objectives

This attendance policy ensures that all staff and Proprietors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

Through this Policy we aim to:

•Improve pupils’ achievement by ensuring high levels of attendance and punctuality.

•Achieve a minimum of 95% attendance for all children, apart from those with chronic health issues.

•Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school.

•Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child’s education.

•Ensure that our policy applies to our Reception aged children in order to promote good habits at an early age.

•Work in partnership with pupils, parents, staff that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence.

•Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure, and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility.

•Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties.

•Recognise the key role of all staff, but especially class teachers, in promoting good attendance.

We maintain and promote good attendance and punctuality through:

•Raising awareness of attendance and punctuality issues among all staff, parents and pupils.

•Ensuring that parents have an understanding of the responsibility placed on them for making sure their child attends regularly and punctually.

•Equipping children with the life skills needed to take responsibility for good school attendance and punctuality appropriate to the child’s age and development.

•Maintaining effective means of communication with parents, pupils, staff and proprietors on school attendance matters.

•Developing and implementing procedures for identifying, reporting and reviewing cases of poor attendance and persistent lateness.

•Supporting pupils who have been experiencing any difficulties at home or at school which are preventing good attendance.

•Developing and implementing procedures to follow up non-attendance at school.

Definitions

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 carer. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent 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.

Unauthorised absence

•An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school.

•Therefore the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Procedures

Our school will undertake to follow the following procedures to support good attendance:

•To maintain appropriate registration processes.

•To maintain appropriate attendance data

•To communicate clearly the attendance procedures and expectations to all staff, parents and pupils.

•To have consistent and systematic daily records which give detail of any absence and lateness.

•To follow up absences and persistent lateness if parents/carers have not communicated with the school.

•To inform parents/carers what constitutes authorised and unauthorised absence.

•To strongly discourage unnecessary absence through holidays taken during term time.

•To work with parents to improve individual pupils attendance and punctuality

•To refer to the Educational Welfare Service any child whose attendance causes concern and where parents/carers have not responded to school initiatives to improve.

•To report attendance statistics to Tower Hamlets LA where requested.

•All staff should be aware that they must raise any attendance or punctuality concerns to the Headship Team with responsibility for monitoring attendance.

Responsibilities

All members of school staff have a responsibility for identifying trends in attendance and punctuality. The following includes a more specific list of the kinds of responsibilities which individuals might have.

Class teacher

Class teachers are responsible for:

•Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers

•Informing the Headship Team where there are concerns and acting upon them

•Providing background information to support referrals

•Monitoring follow-up once actions have been taken to correct attendance concerns

•Emphasising with their class the importance of good attendance and promptness

•Following up absences with immediate requests for explanation which should be noted inside the register

•Discussing attendance issues at consultation evenings where necessary

Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for:

•Overall monitoring of school attendance

•Trends in authorised and unauthorised absence

•Contacting families where concerns are raised about absence including arranging meetings to discuss attendance issues

•Monitoring individual attendance where concerns have been raised

•Making referrals to the EWO or LA service

•Providing reports and background information to inform discussion with the school’s EWO

•Liaising with other professionals to determine potential sources of difficulties and reasons for absence.

Administration staff

Staff in the School Office are responsible for:

•Collating and recording registration and attendance information.

•Taking and recording messages from parents regarding absence

•Ensuring the Absence/Late Book is completed

•Contacting parents of absent children where no contact has been made.

•Recording details of children who arrive late or go home

•Keeping an overview of class and individual attendance looking particularly for either poor overall attendance, anomalies in patterns of attendance and/ or unusual explanations for attendance offered by children and their parents/ carers and reporting concerns to the Headteacher

•Sending out standard letters regarding attendance

Parents

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

•Ensuring that their child attends school regularly and punctually unless prevented from doing so by illness or attendance at a medical appointment.

•Contacting the school office on the first morning of absence.

•Informing the school in advance of any medical appointments in school time. For the absence to be recorded as a medical absence we do require evidence from the doctor or dentist. (Appointment card/letter)

•Making requests for authorised absence in term time, only if absolutely necessary as these are not automatically authorised.

•Talking to the school as soon as possible about any child’s reluctance to come to school so that problems can be quickly identified and dealt with.

Registration

All the school doors open at 8.25 am until 8.35 am. This time is sufficient for all pupils to come into their classroom.

Each class teacher has the responsibility for keeping an accurate record of attendance. Any pupil who is absent must be recorded at the beginning of the morning and afternoon session. The attendance register must be completed by the class teacher by 9.15am and by 1.20pm (KS2) and 1.30pm (KS1) (Attendance code / and \ for pupils who are present) These registers are then returned to the school office.

All attendance records are documented using Integris software, which is supported by the Local Authority. Attendance registers are legal documents and these must be kept secure and preserved for a period of three years after the date they were last used.

Lateness

Once the doors are closed at 9.00am the only way to get into school is via the school office. Any pupil who comes into school this way from 9.00am will be marked as late in the attendance record. Records are kept of those pupils who are late, this is documented on the electronic register for each pupil (Attendance code L). Any child who arrives for school later than the completion of the class register will be marked as having an unauthorised absence for the morning. (Attendance code U).

Children who have attended a dentist or doctor’s appointment and subsequently come to school later than 9.15am will have the absence recorded as a medical absence (Attendance code M).

Children who are persistently late miss a significant amount of learning, often the most important aspect, as the beginning of the day is where the teacher explains the learning and what each child is expected to achieve.

Where there have been persistent incidents of lateness parents/carers will receive a letter advising them of the concerns and the school will provide opportunities for parents/carers to seek support and advice to address these issues.

ABSENCES

Parents/carers should contact the school on the first day of their child’s absence. When parents/carers notify us of their child’s absence it is important that they provide us with details of the reason for their absence.

All absences are recorded as either authorised or unauthorised absences on the computer. It is important that we receive accurate information from parents with reasons for the child’s absence. This information is used to determine whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. The Headteacher has the responsibility to determine whether absences are authorised or unauthorised.

Where we have not received reasons for a child’s absence then a first and a second phone call is made and recorded in the absence log.

Absence will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Attendance Code O) if parents fail to inform the school.

First Day Contact

Where a child is absent from school and we have not received any verbal or written communication from the parent, then we initiate a first day contact process. Office staff checks all of the registers from 9.00am to 9.30am on a daily basis, to identify those pupils who are absent. There are occasions when we are unaware why the child is absent and we will contact the parent to check the reasons for the child’s absence.

If we have not had any contact from parents and we have concerns for the welfare of a child the police may be contacted to complete a safe and well check.

Illness

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school long term, the school 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 to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some home tuition outside school.

Where over the course of an academic year, a child has repeated periods of illness, the school will write to parents to ask them to provide medical evidence for each future period of illness related absence. This evidence could be a Doctor’s note, appointment card or copy of a prescription. We may seek written permission from you for the school to make their own enquiries.

Parental Request for Absence from School for Holiday

The head teacher will only be allowed to grant leave of absence for any reason if they are satisfied exceptional circumstances exist. The school may request a fine for parents who remove children for a family holiday without permission.

Addressing Attendance Concerns

The school expects attendance of at least 95%.

It is important for children to establish good attendance habits early on in their primary school career. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Proprietors to support good attendance and to identify and address attendance concerns promptly. In primary school we rely upon parents to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually and therefore where there are concerns regarding attendance parents are always informed of our concerns. Initially concerns about attendance are raised with parents via letters which are sent home. There will be opportunities for the parent/carer to discuss reasons for absence

and support to be given by the school with the aim to improve attendance. Where a child’s attendance record does not improve over a period of time then the school a responsibility to make a referral to the Educational Welfare Service .

The school will issue penalty notices to parents where there has been a referral to EWO from the school as part of the school’s processes to address poor attendance patterns.

Monitoring Attendance

Our office staff, has the responsibility for ensuring that all of the attendance data regulated. Regular meetings are held with the Deputy Headteacher to discuss all attendance concerns and appropriate actions are taken following these meetings such as letters sent to parents or meetings arranged to discuss attendance concerns with parents. Regular concerns with a pattern will be informed to headteacher to enforce next call of action LA.

\*THIS POLICY IS TO BE READ



**Buttercup Primary school**

**Attendance Policy: COVID-19 Addendum**

**(15.12.20 update)**

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### Introduction

This addendum applies from the 1 September 2020 and reflects updated advice from the Department of Education (DfE) concerning attendance and registration of pupils. The prevalence of coronavirus (COVID-19) has currently decreased, the NHS Test and Trace system is active, and we are clear about the measures that need to be in place to create a safer environment for children attending school.

The attendance addendum will take account for additional changes in normal attendance procedures in line with the Department for Education’s guidance which should be read in conjunction with this addendum.

**The Law**

The law in regards of children attending school will be reinstated from September 2020. Children of compulsory school age must attend regularly to the school at which the child is registered (section 444 of the Education Act 1996) This **means that parents could be penalised if their child does not attend school,** unless an authorised reason applies (for example, the pupil has been granted a leave of absence, is unable to attend because of sickness, is absent for a necessary religious observance etc).

**Self- isolation due to COVID-19 symptoms or a positive test result**

The majority of pupils will be able to return to school in September, however we may experience a small number of pupils who will be unable to attend in line with public health advice because they are self-isolating and have had symptoms or a positive test result themselves; or because they are a close contact of someone who has coronavirus.

Children and staff must stay at home if they are unwell with a new, continuous cough or a high temperature or have a loss or change in their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia) to avoid spreading infection to others. We must be contacted and informed of the need for self-isolation, if children have been attending school.

Parents/carers must contact the NHS for a Coronavirus test or use the test that the school provides if the child has been sent home displaying symptoms. Parents must strictly adhere to this and follow

the school’s Home School Agreement.

## Shielded children

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused from 1 August 2020 - this advice has been updated in light of the increasing rate of infection across the country. Read the [**current advice on**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)[**shielding**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19)

Parents/carers of children who are under the care of a specialist health professional may need to discuss their medical condition with their health professional before returning to school (usually at their next planned clinical appointment).

Where a pupil is unable to attend school because they are complying with their specialist health professional’s advice they will continue to be offered access to remote education.

If rates of the disease rise in the local areas, children (or family members) from that area, and that area only, will be advised to shield during the period where rates remain high and therefore there may be temporary absence from school as a result.

Absence will not be penalised for any of the above reasons if evidence is submitted to the school.

### Children not attending in circumstances related to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Regulation change: pupil absence due to Covid circumstances now recorded as X. Test to be booked [book-a-coronavirus-test-for-your-child](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-parents-and-guardians-when-you-should-book-a-coronavirus-test-for-your-child?utm_source=25%20September%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19)

If test negative and pupil feels well with no Covid-19 symptoms they can return to school. If pupil still unwell (with a different illness) a code of I should be used. X is used up until a negative test result received.

A positive test will mean pupil self isolates for at least 10 days from onset of symptoms. Code I is used at this time and they can return to school once they do not have symptoms (other than a cough or loss of smell or taste.

Member of household has symptoms: whole household should self-isolate and member with symptoms should get tested. If test negative, pupils can return to school. Code X is used for pupil until time of negative test result.

If household member tests positive, pupil must self-isolate for 10 days on the of onset of household member’s start of symptoms. Code X is used for pupil.

### Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine

Holidays should not be during term time as usual. Parents should consider any required self- isolation period required following an overseas trip. If quarantine required, pupils should receive an X code.

### Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020.

If local disease rates rise, children of parents on the shielding list in that area, may be contacted and advised to stay home. Families will receive a letter and will inform the school. Pupils should be recorded as X in this case.

No parent will be penalised for following official public health advice for their child not to attend school, this new category of non-attendance will not count as an absence (authorised or unauthorised) for statistical purposes.

## Anxious pupils and families

We understand that there some pupils or their, parents/carers may be reluctant or anxious about returning to school. We will put the right support in place to address this and provide reassurance of the measures that have been put in place to reduce the risk in school.

We will:

* + communicate clear and consistent expectations around school attendance to parents/carers (and any other professionals who work with the family where appropriate)
  + identify pupils (prior and during them attending) who are reluctant or anxious about returning or who are at risk of disengagement and develop plans for re-engaging them. including disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were persistently absent prior to the pandemic or who have not engaged with school regularly during the pandemic
  + use the additional funding schools will receive, as well as existing pastoral and support services, attendance staff and resources and schools’ pupil premium funding to put measures in place for those families who will need additional support to secure pupils’ regular attendance
  + work closely with other professionals as appropriate to support the return to school, including continuing to notify the child’s social worker, if they have one, of non- attendance or the LA EWO if the pupil has previously low attendance.

### Registration

Normal registration will resume from 1 September 2020 or as the school allows children to re-join by staggered start dates.

The school will:

* Follow up any absence following the normal procedures.
* Explore reasons for absence and discuss any concerns with parents/carers if they are worried about their child returning to school.
* Take advice from LA EWO, where appropriate.

Further [school attendance guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-attendance?utm_source=20%28August%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) is available explaining how to record circumstances where pupils cannot attend school due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and how to complete the [educational](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings?utm_source=25%28August%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) [setting status form.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-attendance-recording-for-educational-settings?utm_source=25%28August%202020%20C19&utm_medium=Daily%20Email%20C19&utm_campaign=DfE%20C19) For those children who are attending the school as keyworker/critical worker’s children, the school normal registers will also be completed.

### School Closure

Current advice remains in place: no education or children’s social care setting should close in response to a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case unless advised to do so by the local health protection team. Daily welfare calls during lockdown are made for all children who attending the setting.

### Monitoring Arrangements

We will continue to review this addendum where necessary, to reflect any updated guidance from:

* + The DfE.
  + Education Welfare Officers Service at the Tower hamlets LA.

This addendum will be reviewed at a minimum of every 4 weeks by the Safeguarding Lead.

**DfES ATTENDANCE CODES: DESCRIPTION AND MEANINGS**

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| **Code** | **Meaning** | **Guidance** |
| **/** | Present (AM) |  |
| **\** | Present (PM) |  |
| **B** | Approved Education Activity | Educated off site (not Dual reg.) |
| **C** | Authorised absence | Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Each application will be considered individually taking into account specific facts and circumstances and any relevant background context  behind the request. |
| **D** | Approved Educational Activity | When a pupil is dually registered at two schools, and for the session in question, they do not to attend the  on-roll school. |
| **E** | Authorised absence | Where alternative provision is not made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded, but still on the admission register. Work may be sent home for a pupil to complete during their term of  exclusion. |
| **G** | Unauthorised absence | When a school does not authorise leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents / carers / guardians still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer that was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to  give retrospective approval. |
| **H** | Authorised absence | Leave of absence is not granted unless there are exceptional circumstances, the application must be made in advance and the Principal must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the Principal will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Principal’s  discretion. |
| **I** | Authorised absence | Illness (not med/dental appointments). The school can request medical evidence to support illness. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions,  appointment cards and/or Doctors’ notes. |
| **J** | Approved Educational Activity | Interview |
| **L** | Present | Late (before registers closed) |
| **M** | Authorised absence | Medical/Dental appointments. The school encourages parents / carers / guardians to make appointments out of school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum  amount of time necessary for the appointment. |
| **O** | Unauthorised absence | Unauthorised Abs (not covered by other code) Includes pupil absence with parent/carer knowledge in instances such as:   * No reason for absence provided * Days off for a birthday * Shopping * Haircut * Waiting for a repair person * Absence without parent/carer’s knowledge All of the above are regarded as truancy. |
| **P** | Approved Sporting Activity | Approved sporting activity |
| **R** | Authorised absence | Religious observance. Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent/carer belongs, including religious festivals. Where necessary, the school may seek advice from the parents / carers /  guardians religious body. |
| **S** | Authorised absence | Study leave |
| **T** | Authorised absence | When the Traveller family are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending education provision. To ensure continuity of education, Traveller children are expected to attend school elsewhere and be dual registered at the  temporary new school and the home school. |
| **U** | Unauthorised absence | Late (after registers closed). This code is used when a pupil arrives after registers have closed. If a pupil  arrives late due to a medical appointment, ‘M’ should  be used. |
| **V** | Approved Educational Activity | Educational visit or trip |
| **W** | Approved Educational Activity | Work experience |
| **X** | Not counted in possible  attendance | Non-compulsory school age absence |
| **Y** | Not counted in possible attendance | Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.  For example, school closed because of heavy snow. |
| **Z** | Not counted in possible attendance | Pupil not on roll |
| **#** | Not counted in possible  attendance | Planned whole or partial school closure. |
| **-** | All should attend / No mark  recorded |  |
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IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SCHOOLS ASSESSMENT POLICY