



Burlish Park Primary School



ATTENDANCE POLICY

DATE: May 2017

RATIFIED BY THE GOVERNING BODY ON: May 2017

REVIEW DATE: May 2019

SIGNED:..... (CHAIR OF GOVERNORS)

DATE:.....



School Attendance and the Law

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes (see appendix A).

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 have removed all references to family holidays and leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application had been made in advance and the headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence. This discretion has been removed by the aforementioned Regulations (2013). Whilst the headteacher will consider all requests on a case-by-case basis, parents must be aware that requests will normally be refused.

Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time, the absence will be coded as unauthorised (G code) and a Penalty Notice may be issued to each parent for each child (where 5 or more days of unauthorised absence are recorded as a result).

The DfE have not provided any guidelines as to what they would consider to be exceptional circumstances. This is solely at the discretion of the headteacher. Where possible, families of schools should look to have a consistent approach to all leave of absence requests – to try to ensure that requests for siblings who attend different schools are met with the same response by each headteacher who receives a request.

If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice. If this penalty is not paid the Local Authority will instigate legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court.

In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, Education Welfare Service, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.



Roles Responsibilities and Procedures

School

- Burlish Park Primary School use the Scholarpack system of registration.
- Morning registration is at 8.50am. Afternoon registration is at 12.50pm for Reception and KS1 and 1.15pm for KS2. Current Nursery registration is at 8.45am for morning children and 12.30pm for afternoon children. From September 2017, Nursery registration will be 9am or 12pm depending on whether it is a full or part-time place. After a period of 20 minutes the register closes and pupils are marked in the register with code U.
- First day contact is made by Mrs C Wright.
- Burlish Park Primary School will only grant leave of absence in exceptional circumstances.
- If attendance falls below 90% a letter of concern is sent to parents.
- Burlish Park Primary School has an Education Welfare Officer that follows up persistent absence after a period of time.

Parents/carers

- Parents should inform the school office of a child's absence before 9am. When children return to school a follow up letter should be written to detail the absence.
Parents should be aware that, where a child appears to be having an unacceptable level of absence due to medical reasons, school may request that medical evidence (such as appointment cards or prescribed medication) be provided to cover all absences. Failure on the part of the parent to provide such medical evidence, will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised and referral to the Worcestershire County Council will be considered.
- If leave of absence is required, parents must fill in a leave of absence form available from the school office.
- There is an expectation to work with school and/or Worcestershire County Council to resolve any attendance issues.

Pupils

- Pupils register in their classrooms both in the morning and afternoon.
- If pupils are late, they should enter the building through the school office with a parent or carer who should sign the pupil signing in and out book.

EWS

- Burlish Park Primary School work with Mr Paul Williams who works to reduce persistent absence, improve overall attendance and give advice and support to children, families and schools.
- Mr P Williams carries out statutory duties on behalf of Burlish Park Primary School to ensure parents/carers fulfil their legal requirements in relation to school attendance



The school may refer a pupil to Worcestershire County Council where attendance remains a concern following school intervention. Worcestershire County Council will work with schools and families to address attendance issues. However, if attendance fails to improve, legal action may be taken against parents/carers and could include a Penalty Notice, Education Supervision Order or Prosecution.

Rewards/Celebrations

Burlish Park Primary celebrates good attendance and punctuality. There is an attendance summary on each newsletter with congratulations given to the class with the highest attendance. Burlish Park also reward good attendance through the following:

- Weekly attendance featured in celebration assembly with a reward for the best class.
- Termly badges for 100% attendance.
- The Stourport Oscars – where children from all schools in the Stourport pyramid are brought together to celebrate and receive a certificate.

Religious Observance

Burlish Park Primary School acknowledges the multi-faith nature of British society and recognises that on some occasions, religious festivals may fall outside school holiday periods or weekends and this necessitates a consideration of authorised absence or special leave for religious observance.

It is reasonable for a parent to allow their children not to attend school on any day of religious observance if recognised by the parent's religious body.

Parents are requested to give advance notice to the school if they intend their child to be absent.

However, in the interests of fulfilling the academic requirements of the school and limiting the authorised absence rate of the school, it is identified as reasonable that no more than one day be designated for any individual occasion of religious observance/festival and no more than three days in total in any academic year. Any further absence will be categorised as unauthorised.

Traveller Absence

The aim for the attendance of Traveller children, in common with all other children, is to attend school as regularly and as frequently as possible.

To protect Traveller parents from unreasonable prosecution for non-attendance, the Education Act 1944, section 86, states that a Traveller parent is safe from prosecution if their child accrues 200 attendances (i.e. 200 half days) in a year. This is only when the family are engaged in a trade or business that requires them to travel and when the child is attending school as regularly as that trade permits.



It does not mean that part-time education for Traveller children is legally acceptable, nor does it relieve parents of their duties to ensure that their children are receiving suitable education when not at school.

When in or around Worcestershire, if a family can reasonably travel back to their Base School (see below) then the expectation is that their child will attend full-time.

Burlish Park Primary School will be regarded as the base school if it is the school where the child normally attends when they are not travelling. However, the pupil must have attended in the last 18 months. Traveller children can register at other schools temporarily while away from their base school, in such cases, the pupil's school place at Burlish Park Primary School will be kept open for them whilst travelling. This is to protect them from unfairly losing their place at their school of usual attendance.

Burlish Park Primary School can only effectively operate as the child's base school if it is engaged in on-going dialogue with Traveller families. This means that parents must:

- advise of their forthcoming travelling patterns before they happen; and
- inform the school regarding proposed return dates

Burlish Park Primary School will authorise absence of Traveller children if we are satisfied that a family is travelling and has given indication that they intend to return.

Traveller children will be recorded as attending an approved educational activity when:

- The child is on roll and attending another visited school
- Undertaking supervised educational activity under the jurisdiction of another Local Authority's Traveller Education Service
- The child is undertaking computer based distance learning that is time evidenced

Where Traveller children are registered pupils at a school and are known to be present either at a site (official or otherwise) or in a house and are not attending school, the absence will be investigated in the same way as that for any pupil.

Evaluation and Review

The school will review this policy every two years and update accordingly to include changes in the law and guidance on good practice. The policy will be promoted throughout the school community and shared with outside agencies and partners as required.



Appendix A – Register Codes

/	Present am
\	Present pm
B	Educated offsite
C	Other authorised circumstance
D	Dual registration
E	Excluded
G	Holiday not agreed
I	Illness
L	Late before register close
M	Medical or dental appointment
N	No reason yet provided for absence
O	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity
R	Religious observance
T	Traveller absence
U	Late after register close
V	Educational visit or trip
X	Non-compulsory school age absence