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| Adobe Systems | **Barrow CE Primary School**  **Attendance Policy**  **September 2022** |

Barrow School aims to ensure its pupils benefit fully from the education we seek to provide by maximising the attendance of each student. We believe that children can only learn effectively if they attend school regularly. It is important too that children arrive and leave school on time, and equally that children should not be at school if they are unwell.

Through communication with parents/carers, we will ensure that they are made fully aware of the school’s Policy on Attendance, and that all children are made aware of the value of regular attendance.

We expect that all pupils will:

* attend school regularly
* attend school punctually

We expect that all parents/carers/persons who have day to day responsibility for the children and young people will:

* encourage regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities.
* ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually. The school gate opens at 0840 hrs. Registration closes at 0900 hrs. Children who arrive after this time are marked as late in the register unless there is a separate coded reason why the child is delayed starting school.
* ensure that they contact the school whenever the child/children is/are unable to attend school.
* contact the school on the first day of the child's absence, no later than 1000 hrs.
* contact the school promptly whenever any problem occurs that may keep the child away from school.

We expect that school staff will:

* keep regular and accurate records of attendance for all pupils, at least twice daily.
* contact parents as soon as possible, when a pupil fails to attend, and no message has been received to explain the absence by 1000 hrs.
* encourage good attendance.
* provide a welcoming atmosphere for children, provide a safe learning environment and provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns.
* make initial enquiries of parents/carers of pupils who are not attending regularly to express their concern and clarify the school's and the LA's expectations with regard to regular school attendance.
* refer irregular or unjustified patterns of attendance to the Education Welfare Officer.

**Holidays**

The school holiday dates are published a year in advance and we strongly advise parents/carers to book their family holidays during the school holidays. Attendance at school is a legal requirement during school term. The Headteacher can only authorise absences in exceptional circumstances. Holidays are not considered an exceptional circumstance.

Any applications for leave of absence must be in exceptional circumstances and the Headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. Applications for leave of absence must be submitted to the school at least one month in advance.

If a parent is considering taking their child out of school knowing an absence is unauthorised, they should be aware the Headteacher may ask the local authority to issue a Fixed Penalty Notice on the child’s return to school. Such a notice may be issued to each parent or carer, in accordance of section 444 of the Education Act 1996. The fixed penalty is £60, which rises to £120 if payment is not made within 21 days of the issue of the notice. Any failure to pay the fine after 28 days may result in prosecution for the child’s absence from school.

The following (non-exhaustive) circumstances are suggested as reasons a Headteacher may give authorised leave for holiday absences due to ‘exceptional circumstances’:

* Service personnel returning from/scheduled to embark on a tour of duty abroad
* When it is company policy for an employee to take leave only at a specified time in the year (evidence required)
* Where a holiday is recommended as part of a parent or child’s rehabilitation from a medical or emotional issue (evidence required)
* May include special occasions such as attending the wedding of a family member or the birth of a sibling
* A unique situation such as the serious illness of a parent, grandparent or other close relative and the holiday is likely to be the last opportunity to experience the holiday together
* A significant family trauma where the child may benefit from the holiday to deal with the situation better
* Being of a unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time.

**Appointments**

Wherever possible, dental or medical appointments should be arranged for children out of school hours. If this is not possible, the school will request to see evidence of an appointment letter or card for the appointment. This should be presented to the school office before the child is removed from school.

**Lateness**

The school and the governing body wish to ensure that all children attend school punctually.

If the child has 5 late marks in the register in a half term, this will trigger a letter of concern from the Headteacher, and if the situation does not improve thereafter, the Headteacher will meet with parents to discuss the issue, and plan steps for improvement.

**Responding To Non-Attendance**

When a pupil does not attend school, the school will respond in the following manner:

On the first day of absence, if no message is received from the parent/carer by 1000 hrs, the school will endeavour to contact them that day. If the family are not on the telephone, a letter will be sent. If there is no response, the school will continue to try to contact the parent/carer. If, by the end of the second day, there has still been no contact made, (third day, if waiting for a response to a letter), the school will send a letter of concern to parents/carers or invite them into school to discuss their concerns. The school will tell parents that if the absence persists, a referral will be made to Education Welfare. Any failure to comply with the expectations set by the Education Welfare may result in further action.

**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 staff as soon as possible. A pupil will not be removed from this 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 Education Welfare.

**School responsibilities**

The governing body is responsible for setting the attendance policy.

The Headteacher:

* ensures that registration procedures are carried out efficiently and that appropriate resources are provided.
* Initiates a scheme for contacting parents on the first day of absence.
* ensures that key staff have appropriate access to attendance data in order to liaise with, and follow-up work with the Education Welfare.
* consults and liaises closely with the Education Welfare on a regular basis and takes responsibility for ensuring appropriate pupils are identified and referred without delay.
* works in close collaboration with the Education Welfare during their timetabled register analysis visits to monitor and evaluate attendance.
* regularly reports attendance figures to the governing body

Class teachers:

* complete registers accurately and punctually at least twice daily
* follow up any unexplained non-attendance
* record all reasons for absences in the register
* inform the designated person in charge of overall attendance of any concerns

Chair of governors: John Armstrong

Date: September 2022

Next Review: September 2024