



Attendance Policy

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Introduction

Beacon Primary Academy is committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all pupils. Regular attendance is essential for pupils' learning, progress, well-being and long-term life chances. We know that pupils with high attendance achieve better outcomes, develop stronger relationships and are better prepared for life and work.

We work in partnership with families and external agencies to promote excellent attendance and punctuality for every child. Parents/carers have a legal responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly and punctually.

The government recognises that a good level of attendance is at least 95%, and our school target is 97%.

At Beacon Primary Academy we:

- Provide a welcoming, caring environment where all pupils feel safe, valued and ready to learn.
- Expect pupils to arrive on time every day.
- Support parents/carers in their legal responsibility to ensure regular attendance.
- Do not authorise term-time leave except in *exceptional* circumstances.
- Celebrate attendance through whole-school initiatives, class rewards and positive communication.
- Encourage all children to keep our **Attendance Promises**:
 - *I will try my best to come to school every day.*
 - *I will try my best to arrive on time every day.*
 - *I will try my best to be prepared for school every day.*
- Promote our Attendance H.E.R.O. message: **Here Every day, Ready, On time.**

School Timings

- Gate opens: 8:40am
- School Starts 8:45am
- Morning register: 8:50am
- Afternoon register: 1:00pm
- Late mark: Any arrival after 8:50am
- Unauthorised Late: Any arrival after 9:15am
- Pupils arriving after 8:50am will be greeted at the Main Entrance and will need to be signed in by a member of staff.

How to notify us of an absence

If your child is unable to attend school due to illness or unavoidable circumstances, please contact the academy on each day of absence by: Calling the office on -

01754 879211

Emailing us at -

enquiries@beaconprimaryacademy.org

Please inform us of any planned absence in advance, this includes unavoidable medical appointments during the school day.

Aim

Ensuring that every pupil maintains high attendance is a core priority at Beacon Primary Academy. All pupils are entitled to a full-time education, and evidence consistently shows that pupils with strong attendance achieve better outcomes than those with frequent or prolonged absence. We also recognise that patterns of absence can indicate wider vulnerabilities or emerging risks in a child's life.

This policy sets out the academy's commitment to fulfilling its statutory duties regarding school attendance, including the expectations outlined in the Department for Education's *Working Together to Improve School Attendance* guidance (effective from 19 August 2024).

Our aim is to create and sustain a positive culture in which good attendance is understood, valued, and actively supported. Through this policy, we outline how we will:

- Promote and celebrate good attendance and punctuality across the academy
- Set and uphold high expectations for all pupils' attendance and punctuality
- Reduce overall absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensure every pupil accesses the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Identify and respond swiftly to emerging patterns of absence
- Build strong, supportive relationships with families so that barriers to attendance can be understood and addressed

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of GAT's Attendance Policy. The Trust policy details the relevant legislation and guidance documents. In particular, this policy carefully follows DfE guidance in this area.

Our work on attendance is linked closely to our approaches to safeguarding and behaviour.

How we promote a culture of high expectations in attendance and punctuality

At Beacon Primary Academy, strong, trusting relationships with pupils and their parents and carers sit at the heart of our approach to attendance. We recognise that the barriers to regular attendance and punctuality differ from family to family, and we work collaboratively to understand these challenges and remove them through a person-centred, supportive approach. Good attendance is promoted across the whole school community so that everyone understands its impact on learning and shares collective ownership of school, class and individual attendance patterns. Communication with parents and carers is clear and purposeful, explicitly linking attendance to progress, wellbeing and long-term outcomes. Through planned whole-school and class activities, the importance of good attendance is consistently modelled and reinforced by all staff.

We acknowledge that some barriers to attendance require sensitive, careful exploration. Positive relationships with families are essential, and identifying the right person to begin the conversation is a key factor in success. This may be the Attendance Lead, a class teacher, a pastoral worker or another trusted adult, what matters is that the dialogue begins early so that support can be put in place.

Our targeted Attendance Plan outlines the support families can expect at each stage. For example, when attendance falls between 96–93%, support may include:

- Informal discussions with the pupil to explore any concerns or barriers.
- Reminder information sent home to reinforce expectations.
- Parents/carers invited to meet with the Pupil Engagement and Pastoral Lead to establish an attendance plan.
- A bespoke plan created to address the child's individual needs.

When a pupil experiences long-term or recurring absence, our response is tailored to their specific circumstances. This may include:

- Reviewing the existing parental agreement and updating it as needed.
- Identifying additional support from the school or external partners, including Early Help.
- Activating support for pupils experiencing mental health difficulties, including anxiety, using the Lincolnshire EBSA Ladder. This provides a graduated approach supported by the Local Authority and NHS services.
- Ensuring teachers are informed of individualised plans so they can support attendance and reintegration into learning.

Attendance is an integral part of our whole-school culture. We emphasise shared success by celebrating and regularly highlighting class attendance percentages in assemblies. Each term, we celebrate the commitment and positive habits shown by pupils, recognising those who demonstrate excellent attendance across each term.

Our expectations

Pupils are expected to arrive at Beacon Primary Academy from 8:40am each day.

- Morning register: 8:50am
- Afternoon register: 1:00pm

Parents/carers who choose to register their child at a school have a legal duty to ensure their child attends regularly. This means attending every day the school is open, except in a small number of permitted circumstances such as genuine illness or authorised absence agreed in advance.

For the purposes of this policy, 'parent' refers to:

- All natural parents, whether married or not
- Any adult with parental responsibility
- Any adult who has day-to-day care of the child

Responsibilities

Parents and Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Ensure their child attends school every day and on time
- Report absence by 8:50am on each day of absence by calling the school office
- Provide more than one emergency contact
- Arrange medical or other appointments outside school hours wherever possible
- Work with the school to overcome any barriers to attendance
- Seek support when needed by contacting the Attendance Lead

Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day, arrive on time, and be ready to learn
- Follow the school's Attendance Promises and be an Attendance H.E.R.O. (Here Every day, Ready On time)

Leadership Responsibilities

Senior Leadership

The Senior Leadership are responsible for:

- Implementing this policy across the academy
- Monitoring attendance data and reporting to the Trust
- Overseeing the impact of attendance strategies and interventions

- Working with local partners where formal procedures (e.g., parental contracts, penalty notices) are required
- Working with parents of pupils with SEND to address attendance barriers, including missed transport or in-school challenges
- Liaising with the local authority where pupils with an EHCP have falling attendance or unmet needs
- Communicating high expectations for attendance and punctuality to pupils and families

Pupil Engagement and Pastoral Lead

The Pupil Engagement and Pastoral Lead is responsible for:

- Leading and championing attendance across the academy
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Monitoring and analysing attendance
- Identifying concerns early and overseeing interventions
- Building strong, supportive relationships with families
- Liaising with external agencies where needed
- Creating reintegration or support plans for pupils with ongoing or complex attendance needs
- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families
- Producing attendance reports for leaders and staff

Attendance Lead: *Mrs Sowden* Contact: 01754879211 |
ssowden@beaconprimaryacademy.org

Attendance Team

- Mrs Sowden – Attendance Lead
- Miss Heard – Senior Administrator

The team meets weekly to review attendance, punctuality, and support needs.

Staff Responsibilities

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Taking registers at 8:50am and 1:00pm
- Submitting register information promptly to the office
- Raising attendance or punctuality concerns with the Attendance Team
- Promoting good attendance within their class

Administrative Staff

Admin staff will:

- Take and record daily absence calls
- Transfer calls to the Attendance Lead where more detailed support is required

Recording attendance

We will keep an electronic 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.

We will use the national attendance and absence codes from the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the academy of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 8.50am or as soon as practically possible by calling the main school telephone number on 01754879211.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the academy has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt or the absence is longer than three days the academy 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 academy is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this.

Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised providing the pupil's parent/carer notifies the academy in advance of the appointment.

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 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. The leave of absence form can be found on our website.

The Principal may only authorise leave in exceptional circumstances, in line with the 2024 School Attendance Regulations. Family holidays will not be authorised.

Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend does not, or stops attending without reason, the academy will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason.
- 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.
- If the academy cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the academy may ask the Family Support Worker to do a home visit. If the Academy has not been informed of the reason for absence over consecutive days, the police may be asked to do a safe and well check.
- 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 academy will consider involving the best approach, which may be support offered via the Attendance Officer, Family Key Worker or signposting to a further outside agency depending on the circumstances.

Reporting to parents/ carers

- The academy will inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels through reports and attendance related messages will be sent once a child's attendance has dropped below the threshold of 95%.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

The Principal may only authorise a leave of absence during term time where exceptional circumstances apply and where the request meets the criteria set out in the *2024 School Attendance Regulations*. Authorisation is entirely at the Principal's discretion, including the length of time granted.

Leave of absence will not be authorised for pupils to take part in protest activity during school hours.

Each request is considered on an individual basis, taking into account the specific circumstances, evidence provided, and the wider context of the pupil's attendance.

Requests for term-time absence should be submitted as early as possible, and ideally at least two weeks in advance, using the academy's Leave of Absence Request Form available on the school website. Supporting evidence may be required.

Family holidays should not be taken during term time, as they disrupt learning and progress. Holidays will not be authorised except in very exceptional circumstances.

Legal Sanctions and Unauthorised Absence

Beacon Primary Academy is required to report patterns of poor attendance to the Local Authority. Where absence is unauthorised, the Local Authority may issue a Penalty Notice.

A referral to the Inclusion and Attendance Service will be made for unauthorised term-time absence. Current criteria include:

- Ten sessions of unauthorised absence within a ten-week period

Penalty Notices are issued per parent, per child.

From August 2024, the national Penalty Notice charges are:

- £80 if paid within 21 days
- £160 if paid within 28 days

If a parent receives a second Penalty Notice for the same child within a three-year period, the fine will automatically be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent are capped at two within any three-year period. Once this limit is reached, the Local Authority may consider further action, such as a parenting order or prosecution.

If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500.

Money raised via fines is only used by the local authority to cover the costs of administering the system, and to fund attendance support. Any extra money is returned to the government.

Please note, the Academy does not issue or receive these funds.

Supporting pupils who are absent or returning to school

Pupils absent due to complex barriers to attendance

For children who face complex barriers to attendance, we will meet with families and have a sensitive conversation to work together and put the right support in place for their individual needs.

Pupils absent due to mental or physical ill health or SEND

We work closely and sensitively with families and children who have an additional need or illness. To try and help children who struggle to come into school we can offer later starts and earlier collections for a set length of time, we will do 'meet and greets' at the main Reception door, daily 'walk and talks' on the way to class or whatever deemed appropriate for that child, on a case-by-case basis. We do our best to ensure the support given is bespoke to the needs of the child.

Where a pupil has an education health and care (EHC) plan and their attendance falls, or the school becomes aware of barriers to attendance that related to the pupil's needs, the academy must inform the Local Authority.

Pupils returning to school after a lengthy or unavoidable period of absence

As with everything we do, how children return to school after a long period of absence is based on the circumstances and needs of the individual. We work closely with families to ensure the right support is in place when returning to school.

How we monitor attendance

The academy will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data weekly, half-termly, termly and yearly across the academy and at an individual pupil level
- Identify children whose absences may be a cause for concern.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term by the trust and DfE and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases.

Analysing attendance

The academy will:

- Analyse 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
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

Using data to improve attendance

The academy will:

- Develop targeted actions to address patterns of absence (of all severities) of individual pupils, groups or cohorts that have identified via data analysis.
- Provide targeted support to the pupils it has identified whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence, and their families.
- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers to facilitate discussions with pupils and families, and to the governing board and school leaders (including special educational needs co-ordinators, designated safeguarding leads and pupil premium leads).
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies.
- Share information and work collaboratively with other schools in the area, local authorities and other partners where a pupil's absence is at risk of becoming persistent or severe, including keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate.

Reducing persistent and severe absence

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

The academy will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the academy (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, at risk of or persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance such as Family Action, Safer Families, social workers, Early Help workers, BOSS (Behavioural Support Service) and PRU (Lincolnshire Pupil Reintegration Unit).
- Do a home visit on the first day of absence for identified children, even if a message is received from parents. Pastoral support will be offered, and work given to complete at home. Subsequent home visits may be done if the pupils absence continues or if the Attendance Team feel it necessary.
- If there is no answer when the Team arrive, normal safeguarding procedures will apply.

The procedure for highlighting and managing attendance is as follows:

1. When it is identified that a child's attendance drops below 95% the first letter* is sent home. If at the next review the child's attendance improved, they will continue to be monitored but no further action is taken at that time.
2. If at the next review, attendance has not improved and or worsened, a second letter* is sent home. Again, if at that review the child's attendance improved, they will continue to be monitored but no further action is taken at that time.
3. If attendance continues to be an issue at the third review or a child's attendance has suddenly dropped below 90% parents are invited in for a meeting with Mrs Sowden, the attendance lead. During that meeting barriers to attendance and or punctuality are discussed. We also make an agreement that children will improve in the following 5 weeks. It is also stated that any absence, without proof of medical appointment or approval by the Principal for extreme circumstances will not be authorised.
4. If the child's attendance does sufficiently improve, we continue to monitor but no further action is taken at that time. However, if there is no improvement we may then contact the

*The Attendance Lead and Officer meet termly and will review on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration the circumstances leading to a child's attendance dropping below 95%. In these situations, dispensation may be given, and no letter will be issued.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the trust or DfE is updated, and as a minimum, annually by the Principal.