

# Bilton Church of England Junior School

**Policy for: Attendance**

**Formed by: Suzanne Hodgson**

**Last Review Date: May 2019**

**Ratified by the Governing Body on: 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013**



Date reviewed	Page number of changes	Summary of changes made
05/11/13	P3 P3 P4	<p>Bullet point re 10 days of unexplained absence amended to show FPN may be issued.</p> <p>New bullet point at top of page re any child missing 10 sessions over a 5 week period.</p> <p>Punctuality: Updated to show FPN may be issued.</p>
14/04/14	P1 P2 P3 P4	<p>New paragraph added re legal obligations.</p> <p>Time by which to report absence changed to 9.30a.m</p> <p>Bullet point 6 now refers to either FPN or criminal proceedings.</p> <p>Under LOA bullet point 4 now shows requests made in writing.</p> <p>Bullet point 5 refers to either FPN or criminal proceedings.</p> <p>Final comment on LOA shows request should be made by parent with residency.</p> <p>Punctuality: final bullet point now refers to FPN and criminal proceedings</p>

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<b>Date reviewed</b>	<b>Pages</b>	<b>Summary of Change</b>	<b>Reviewed by</b>
09/09/14	P3, P4	Final bullet point added re Ill, Helath Team bullet point 4 now states legal action may be taken	SH
18/03/15	P2, P3	Parent/carer section: Bullet point 4 amendment to reporting procedure Staff section:Bullet point 9 add on ACE 'may take further action'	SH
Dec 2015	P3,5,6	School target increased to 96%, As above plus PA rate now 90%, related policies added	SH
Feb 2017	P1, P6	Update Governor details Comment 'action may be taken' added to final bullet point on page.	SH
Sept 2017	P4	Updated info re Leave Of Absence	SH
May 2018	P2	Updated info re Leave of Absence	SH
May 2018	P2	Info order changed due to above.	SH
May 2019		Change of name from ACE to WAS	SH



# Bilston Church of England Junior School

**Governors Committee Responsible:** Learning and Standards

**Named Governor Responsible for overseeing Attendance issues:** Mr P Kirkaldy & Mrs k Browning

**Policy Originator:** Mrs Suzanne Hodgson

**Review period:** Annual

**Next review date:** May 2020

## **Introduction:**

The staff and Governors at Bilston Church Of England Junior School are committed to building an environment which enables and encourages all members of our school community to aim for excellence.

We know that for our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school regularly and on time, every day that the school is open.

As parents/carers, it is your legal responsibility to make sure your child attends school. Whilst we understand that sometimes absences are unavoidable, it is important that you make sure your child attends regularly, and this policy sets out what the school expects of parents/carers and what you can expect from us in return.

**The Education Act 1996 requires parents or guardians to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Under section 7 of the Education Act 1996, parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. Parents have a legal responsibility to ensure their child's regular attendance at the school where they are registered. If a child of compulsory school age who is registered at school fails to attend regularly at the school then the parent is guilty of an offence under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.**

**Since March 2001 there has been a further offence where a parent, knowing that their child is failing to attend regularly at school, fails without reasonable justification to cause him/her to attend (Education Act 1996, section 444(1A) as amended by the Criminal Justice and Court Service Act 2000).**



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## **Leave of Absence**

The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence; The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

- Head teachers **shall not grant any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- Parents do not have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the Head Teacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave.
- Head Teachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e the parent with whom the child normally resides.
- Applications for Leave of Absence must be made in advance and failure to do so will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being recorded as “unauthorised”. This may result in legal action against the parent, by way of a Fixed Penalty Notice, if the child is absent from school during that period.
- All matters of unauthorised absence relating to a Leave of Absence will be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service of Warwickshire County Council.
- The Warwickshire Attendance Service have the authority to consider issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for Leave of Absence in line with the Warwickshire County Council’s Non-School Attendance and Penalty Notices Code of Conduct. (A copy of which can be found at <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/pupilnonattendance>).
- If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.

**Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered on a case by case basis and on its own merits.**



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## Expectations:

### We expect ALL pupils will:

- Attend school regularly
- Attend school punctually
- Attend school appropriately prepared for the day ahead

### We expect ALL parents/carers will:

- Encourage and support regular school attendance and be aware of their legal responsibilities with regard to ensuring this happens.
- Ensure that the child/children in their care arrive at school punctually (**by 8.50am**), prepared for the day.
- Ensure if the child/children is/are late (or you know they are going to be) that you either attend the school office with them to update staff, or contact us by phone/email to advise as to the reason.
- Contact school by 9.30a.m on the first day of the child's absence to advise staff of the reason and an expected return date if known. (This can be done in person, over the phone (01788 810675), via e mail to [absence@biltonjuniorschool.co.uk](mailto:absence@biltonjuniorschool.co.uk) or via the dedicated link on the school website at [www.biltonjuniorschool.co.uk](http://www.biltonjuniorschool.co.uk) . Please update the office each day with regard on-going absence.
- Send a note on the child's return to school, detailing the reason the child was absent and confirming the dates the child was away from school. The note needs to be dated and signed by the parent/carer. If absence is not followed up by such a note, the register may show 'unauthorised absence'.
- Notify Home/School Support Worker of any home circumstances that might affect the child's ability to attend school, their emotional wellbeing, behaviour or learning. (via school telephone or email [homeschoolsupport@biltonjuniorschool.co.uk](mailto:homeschoolsupport@biltonjuniorschool.co.uk))
- Seek support from Home/School Support Worker if encouraging or getting your child/children to come to school is a problem.
- Always try to arrange medical and other appointments out of school time. If this is not possible, please send a copy of the appointment card/letter to school so a copy can be added to your child's file to support the absence.
- Arrange for holidays to take place during school holidays, not in term time.

### You can expect staff to:

- Provide a welcoming atmosphere for the children.
- Provide a safe learning environment.
- Provide a sympathetic response to any pupil's concerns.
- Encourage good attendance.



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- Mark registers accurately and punctually: Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day: once at the start of the morning session (8.50a.m) and once during the afternoon session (1.30p.m). An entry **MUST** be made on the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school's admission roll. Where a child is marked as absent, the register must show if this absence is authorised or unauthorised. Absence can only be authorised by school, not parents. All absences will be treated as unauthorised unless a satisfactory explanation is received.

Any child arriving in class after 8.55a.m will be marked in the register as late.

Any child arriving after register has closed at 9.15a.m will be marked as 'unauthorised absence' unless we receive notification in advance and the reason for lateness is deemed to be genuine.

- Monitor every pupil's attendance and inform the Head Teacher of any concerns (where attendance drops below our **individual target level of 96%**).
- Contact parents/carers as soon as possible when a pupil fails to attend where no message has been received to explain the absence.
- Where contact with parents/carers cannot be made, attempts will be made to call remaining contacts on child's personal form. If this proves negative, home visits will be carried out.
- Automatically refer to Social Services if a child on the 'Child Protection Register' is absent from school without explanation.
- Instigate 'Child Missing from Education' procedures where any child registered at our school has 10 consecutive days of unexplained absence and all reasonable steps have been taken by school to establish their whereabouts without success.
- Notify Warwickshire Attendance Service (WAS) if any pupil registered at our school misses at least 10 sessions (5 school days) due to unauthorised absence in any 5 week period. A referral to the WAS could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued to you or criminal prosecution proceedings being issued against you.
- Follow up all unexplained absences to obtain notes explaining the absence.
- Make appropriate initial enquiries regarding pupils who are not attending regularly.
- Express concerns where attendance falls below 96%, and clarify with parents/carers the school's and Local Authority's expectations with regard to regular school attendance. This may include informing parents/carers of their child's attendance %, arranging meetings with the Home/School Support Worker or liaising with Warwickshire Attendance Service who may take further action.
- Publish attendance statistics on the school website/newsletter.
- Maintain regular contact with Warwickshire Attendance Service regarding school attendance and punctuality.
- Where a child has a high level of absence due to illness, school may request confirmation from a doctor (or other medical professional) to confirm the reason for absence was genuine.
- Where a child is absent from school for reasons of illness and/or injury, school will liaise with the parents to provide work. Where the absence is (or is expected to be) more than 15 school



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- days, we will refer to the Ill Health Team and Warwickshire Attendance Service (in accordance with WCC Policy for Access to Education For Children & Young People With Health Needs).

## Punctuality

Lateness in school not only causes disruption to the child who is late, but also to the rest of the class. It is important that pupils arrive on time.

- Doors open at 8.40a.m
- School starts at 8.50a.m
- Register remains open in class until 8.55a.m
- After 8.55a.m children must get booked in via the school office (with parents present to update staff unless they have called/emailed ahead)
- All registers close at 9.15a.m and any arrival after this time will be recorded as an unauthorised absence unless we have received notification as to the reason beforehand.

Persistent lateness will be referred to the Home/School Support Worker who will make contact with parents/carers in order to try and resolve the issue. If lateness persists, the matter will be referred to the Head Teacher and, where necessary, action may be taken or the matter may be referred to the Warwickshire Attendance Service. Where persistent lateness is equivalent to 10 sessions in any 5 week period, a referral may be made to the Warwickshire Attendance Service which could result in a Fixed Penalty Notice being issued or criminal prosecution proceedings being issued against you.)

## Safeguarding

Staff and Governors at Bilton Church of England Junior School take a robust approach to Safeguarding matters. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within this school, promoting the children's welfare and life opportunities is key. Failing to attend school on a regular basis may be considered a safeguarding issue.

## Targets

Bilton Church of England Junior School has set a target to improve attendance and reduce lateness because we know that regular and prompt attendance is crucial to sound educational progress being achieved.

You and your child have an essential role to play in helping us achieve this target and we would ask for your continued support!

**We expect each pupil achieve at least 96% attendance.**

Under Department for Education guidelines (2015), any child achieving an attendance rate of 90% or less may be considered to be a Persistent Absentee. Should this low level of attendance persist,



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school has the right to refer to the Warwickshire Attendance Service who may take further action.

Throughout the school year, we will monitor absence and punctuality to show where improvement needs to be made.

## Summary

All staff and Governors at Bilton Church of England Junior School are committed to working with parents and children to ensure a high a level of attendance in order to maximise the children's opportunities to learn whilst at this school.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance.

**Parents/carers have a legal duty to ensure their child /children attend school regularly.**

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## Staff & Governors responsible for attendance matters

Mrs A Norton.....Head Teacher

Mr P Kirkaldy & Mrs K Browning ... Co-Chair of Governors

Mrs S Hodgson.....Home/School Support Worker

## Other related policies:

### **Child Protection**

(Available in the staffroom and on our website)

### **Whistleblowing:**

(Also available in the staff room)

- We cannot expect children to raise concerns when staff fail to do so.
- Whilst it is not always a comfortable thought, staff must be aware of their duty to raise any genuine concerns about attitudes or actions of colleagues. Our Whistleblowing policy allows this to happen in a professional way.

### **Bullying**

(Also available in the staff room and to parents on our website)

- Our policy on bullying acknowledges that to allow or condone bullying may lead to consideration under child protection procedures.



## **Health & Safety**

(Also available in the staff room and to parents on our website)

- Our Health & Safety policy reflects the consideration we give to the protection of our children both within the school environment and when away from the school when undertaking school trips and visits.

## **Special Educational Needs**

(Also available in the staff room and to parents on our website)

- We recognise that statistically children with behaviour difficulties and disabilities are most vulnerable to abuse. School staff who deal with children with profound and multiple disabilities, sensory and/or behavioural problems are particularly sensitive to signs of abuse.

## **Behaviour Management**

(Also available in the staff room and to parents on our website)

- This policy gives clear guidance on expected behaviours to parents, staff and pupils.

