

Beeston Rylands Junior School

POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE

INTRODUCTION

- **THIS DOCUMENT IS** a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for ensuring the highest possible levels of attendance at Beeston Rylands Junior School
- **IT WAS DEVELOPED** in 2017 through a process of consultation with staff and governors
- **IT WILL BE** continuously reviewed, updated and approved by the staff and governing body
- This policy will be **REVIEWED ANNUALLY**

Date of review	Summer 2019	Autumn 2020	Autumn 2021
Signed			

This policy supports and takes account of:-

- The Nottinghamshire Attendance Policy
- The January 2015 DfE document ‘School attendance parental responsibility measure; statutory guidance for local authorities, school leaders, school staff, governing bodies and the police’.
- The Nottinghamshire County Council Improving Attendance Toolkit
- The Nottinghamshire Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices Issued in respect of Truancy and Excluded Pupils
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ATTENDANCE

Beeston Rylands Junior School is committed to working with parents/carers and children to ensure that every child achieves the highest level of attendance at school. Beeston Rylands Junior School is committed to working in partnership with parents and other agencies who can contribute to a holistic approach to improving school attendance. Parents have a duty to ensure that their children receive full time education. At Beeston Rylands Junior School we believe that it is vital that children are punctual and have good attendance to enable them to achieve their full potential both academically and socially.

We aim to achieve an attendance rate of 97% or more. To support this Beeston Rylands Junior School will provide the following in an effort to maintain and improve attendance:-

- A warm and welcoming atmosphere into which children and parents come each day.
- Encouragement to the children to come to school regularly and on time. Punctuality will be monitored. There will be regular ‘Punctuality Weeks’ where pupils will be rewarded for coming to school on time for the whole week.
- Take the register carefully; making sure mistakes are not made.
- When children are away and the school has not been informed for the reason of absence, the school will follow this up promptly by phone call or text message. See Appendix 1 – Absence Procedures
- When children return from an absence they will be given a sympathetic welcome, avoiding any negative comments.
- Support will be given to parents whose children who find regular attendance difficult.
- Parents will be fully informed about persistent lateness.
- Any children who achieve 100% attendance during a half term will receive an award at the end of the half term.
- Children whose attendance falls below 92% attendance during a half term will be monitored and a letter sent home. Any absences will be followed up with a text to remind parents that their attendance is low and they need to return to school.

As a school we take our safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously. We recognise that young people can be vulnerable in a number of ways and that the dangers in the online world are as much a threat as those in the real world. We have ensured that our staff understand what make some children and adults more vulnerable to certain risk factors; how to recognise the signs of somebody at risk; and what to do if they have a cause for concern. We include in our consideration risk of radicalisation and extremism; female genital mutilation; forced marriage and honour based violence; and child sexual exploitation. We will ensure that any changes in behaviour or patterns of attendance are identified quickly and appropriate action is taken swiftly and that it is proportionate to the level of concern. We will work with the whole school community to ensure all our stakeholders understand our wider safeguarding responsibilities and work in partnership with us to keep our pupils safe.

SCHOOL SESSIONS AND REGISTRATION

Morning: - 8.55am – 12.00pm (school opens for pupils from 8.45am)
Afternoon: - 1.00pm – 3.25pm

Children are expected to be in their classroom when school starts at 8.55am. If they have gone home for lunch they are expected to be back in school via the main entrance by 1.00pm. The class teacher will take the register as soon as the children are settled in their classroom.

The gates to the school from the road will be locked at 9.00am. Any child arriving after this time must enter the school at the main reception where they will be registered by a member of the office staff.

LATENESS

If a child arrives after the register is taken and before 9.15am in the morning or 1.15pm in the afternoon they will be marked as being late in the register. If a child arrives after 9.15am in the morning or 1.15pm in the afternoon they will be marked as having an unauthorised absence in the register for that session. The school can ask the Local Authority to issue a penalty notice when a pupil is persistently late for 10 separate instances over a period of six school weeks and where these are marked as unauthorised absences in the register.

ABSENCE

If a child is going to be absent from school then the child's parent/carer must inform the school in writing or verbally giving the reason why the child is absent.

If a child has not arrived at school by 9.30am, and no reason has been given to the school, then a member of the office staff will contact the parents/carers to find out why the child is not at school.

The school will decide if an absence can be authorised. Authorised absences include illness, attendance at medical appointments and family emergencies. Unauthorised absences include holidays, looking after family members, shopping during school hours and regular illness where no medical evidence is forthcoming.

The Government has changed the law with regard to requests for term-time holidays.

From 1st September 2013, no Headteacher may authorise holidays for children in full time school during term-time. The previous 10 day rule (under which parents could request up to 10 days leave of absence for their child) has gone.

This is because we know that missing out on lessons leaves children/young people vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary schools.

A parent may request leave of absence for their child "under exceptional circumstances." However, a holiday of any sort does not count as exceptional. The Headteacher has the discretion whether or not to authorise absence he/she considers "exceptional."

This is government policy and parents who take their children on holiday without permission will incur unauthorised absences for their child. These remain on the child's record and could be monitored for further action by the Attendance Service. Parents could be issued with a fixed penalty notice and/or court action.

Attendance is monitored every half term by the office staff and any child who is regularly late or has below 92% attendance will be brought to the attention of the Headteacher. The Headteacher will then write to the parent/carer and remind them of the importance of regular punctual attendance at school. If the situation does not improve then a referral will be made to the Family Service Enforcement Lead through the Early Help Unit.

ISSUING PENALTY NOTICES FOR TRUANCY (taken from The Nottinghamshire Local Code of Conduct for Penalty Notices Issued in respect of Truancy and Excluded Pupils)

Penalty Notice Fines may be issued as follows:

Persistent Absence (below 90% attendance)

- If the unauthorised absence is in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) over a 6 week rolling period then the school can issue or ask the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom persistent absence applies.
- In these cases the Local Authority may also consider what services or measures may be provided to prevent or reduce further unauthorised absence including support and interventions through the Family Service.

Holidays During School Term Time

- If the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is in excess of 3 days (6 sessions) in total over a 6 week rolling period, then the school can issue or request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom unauthorised absence applies.
- The standard of evidence required will be the same as that required for court cases brought under section 444(1) of the Education Act 1996.).
- The evidence should include a warning to the parent(s) alerting them that a PN may be issued or requested should an unauthorised absence occur that meets the threshold.
- Where a penalty notice is unpaid with the 28 day deadline, it will be necessary for the person who issued a penalty notice to provide evidence for the court case by way of a Section 9 Statement (a witness statement admissible in court under the Criminal Justice Act and the Magistrates' Courts Act and Rules).
- An Enforcement Lead from the Family Service will consult with the person providing the Section 9 Statement and offer guidance as required and arrange for the Section 9 Statement to be completed in the appropriate format.
- If the defendant requests the author of a Section 9 Statement to be present at the court hearing the Local Authority will notify the person concerned as soon as such a request is made.

A parent will be issued with no more than two penalty notices, relating to the same child, within a twelve month period.

ISSUING PENALTY NOTICES FOR EXCLUDED PUPILS

The school can ask the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice if they have evidence that an excluded pupil was present in a public place during school opening hours without reasonable justification.

CHILDREN MISSING IN EDUCATION

School will follow the Nottinghamshire County Council 'GUIDANCE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND BUSINESS MANAGERS WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION' flowchart to ensure all safeguarding procedures for children missing in education are followed.

THE ROLE OF STAFF

Class teachers will take the register at the start of the morning and afternoon session. The register will then be returned to the school office.

The office staff will input the register onto the computerised attendance system, SIMS.

The office staff/class teachers will alert the Headteacher of any child who is regularly late or absent.

The Headteacher will contact the parents/carers and Targeted Support if necessary.

OTHER POLICY DOCUMENTS THAT UNDERPIN THIS POLICY FOR BEHAVIOUR

- ANTI BULLYING POLICY
- EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY
- SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS POLICY
- PUPIL DISCIPLINE and BEHAVIOUR
- EQUALITY POLICY
- WHOLE SCHOOL POLICY FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND TO SAFEGUARD AND PROMOTE THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN



Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School

&

Beeston Rylands Junior School 

15th February 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

Changes to our Absence Procedures

There have been national incidents that have happened recently where children haven't attended school because their parent has died suddenly while the children are at home and the children have not being able to summon help. As a result of this we have updated our procedures **if your child is absent from school and we have not had a message from you explaining why**. This is to ensure the safety of you and your child.

1. 9.30am. Send you a text message asking you to contact school to explain why your child is absent.
2. 10.00am. If we have still not had a reason for your child's absence we will ring you to find out why they are absent from school. If we get no answer from the 1st contact we will then ring all other contact numbers you have given to us in order to ascertain if you and your child are safe.
3. If we still have not heard that you and your child are safe staff will visit your home to check that everything is alright.

From our point of view we would prefer you to contact us before the beginning of the school day to explain why your child is absent from school. The answer machine is always switched on so you can leave a message at any time of the day or night.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Jackie Moss

Executive Headteacher

Trent Vale Infant and Nursery School and Beeston Rylands Junior School

Appendix 2

GUIDANCE FOR HEAD TEACHERS AND BUSINESS MANAGERS WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT RISK OF MISSING EDUCATION

