



INFORMATION & ADVICE ON ATTENDANCE

This leaflet provides information and advice on attendance for parents. Our full attendance policy can be found at www.barleylaneschool.org.uk

Why Attendance Matters

Regular attendance helps students to make good progress and enjoy learning. We consider pupil attendance to be the **joint** responsibility of parents/carers and the schools. Being at school is a very important part of any young person's life. It enables them to learn, to make friends and to gain the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for a successful adult life. School and parents/carers are partners in making this happen. As parents/carers it is **your** responsibility to make sure that your child makes the most of this opportunity by ensuring a high level of attendance is maintained.

The school is required by law to record and publish rates of absence to include unauthorised absence. It is therefore imperative that registers are accurately marked and unexplained absences are investigated.

What Constitutes Good Attendance?



97% is expected attendance. This still equates to **six days** absence a year.



90% attendance. This equates to six months absence over 5 years.



85% will lead to the schools duty to work with the Education Welfare Officer Support

Persistent Absence/Suspicious Absence

If attendance is persistent or suspicious, contact will be made with parents/carers outlining the importance of good attendance and offering support. Attendance is monitored and if attendance dips below the following thresholds the necessary protocols will be followed.

Stage	% of attendance	School Protocols
1	< 92%	Attendance monitored
2	< 90%	Attendance letter 1 sent home
3	< 87%	Attendance letter 2 sent home
4	< 85%	Headteacher organises meeting with parent/carer, possible attendance contract, Educational Welfare Officer informed.
5	< 85% no improvement	Educational Welfare Officer INTERVENTION/possible legal proceedings

Authorised & Unauthorised Absences

The law states that the Headteacher can authorise absence in exceptional circumstances and that this must be sought in advance of the proposed absence using the **S2 Form**.

Parents should ensure that they know whether the absence will be authorised or not before they go away as an unauthorised absence will likely result in a penalty notice or a court summons being issued to each parent for each pupil affected. It is therefore recommended that this completed form is sent into the school **at least three school weeks** before the intended absence.

PARENTS SHOULD NOTE THAT ONLY ONE PENALTY NOTICE PER PARENT PER CHILD WILL NORMALLY BE ISSUED WITHIN A TWO YEAR PERIOD. A second 'offence' within a two year period will be referred straight to court.

As a parent/carer, you have a **legal responsibility** to ensure that your child attends school regularly and punctually.

Authorised Absences

Absence for the following reasons would normally be authorised but patterns of absence will be monitored and investigated if necessary. *If absence drops below certain thresholds then absences may need to be evidenced (eg doctor's note for illness) before it will be authorised.*

Illness

Essential Medical Appointment

Funerals

Wedding of Parent/Sibling

Other Circumstances Considered Exceptional

Unauthorised Absences

Examples of unauthorised absence are shown below:

Truancy

Looking after younger children/sick relatives

Birthdays (pupil/relative)

Resting after a late night

Relatives visiting/visiting relatives

Attending concerts/events

Any absence the school has not been informed about and not approved

Holiday during term time

(even if parents consider their line of work to be such that they cannot take holidays during designated school holidays, e.g. Key worker, this still would be unauthorised)

Holidays In Term Time

School holiday dates are published well in advance and parents are expected to plan and take family holidays at this time so as not to disrupt their children's education. In **exceptional circumstances** the Headteacher has the discretion to authorise leave in term time but parents should be aware that this is **not a legal entitlement**.

With only 190 statutory school days in the school year, this means there are 175 days (weekends and school holidays) left for family visits, non-urgent medical/dental appointments, holidays etc.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013, which became law 1st September 2013, states that Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

At the Barley Lane School, we take school attendance very seriously and are committed to attempting to engage every child with the school environment and education. We consider ourselves to be a very supportive and approachable school and will try to make considerations for pupils who need extra support. We are, however, bound by law to ensure that every pupil attends school.

As always, if your child is experiencing difficulties at school, however big or small, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Attendance@barleylane.devon.sch.uk

01392 430774 – Main Office

Some facts about school attendance...

Keeping children away from school for no good reason is a criminal offence.

Young children find it very difficult to get back into their friendship groups after a period of absence.

80% attendance is the same as having a day off every week.

The government set 96% as the minimum satisfactory attendance for all pupils – this is still 8 days absence.

Shopping for new clothes or taking time off school for a birthday are not good enough reasons to keep your child off school.
Absences without good reason cannot be authorised.

There are 175 non-school days per year to:

- Spend time together
- Go on family visits
- Go shopping
- Attend routine appointments like dental check-ups

Children who have poor attendance may find it difficult to catch up on the work they have missed.

There is a strong link between good school attendance and achieving good results. Children who frequently miss school may fall behind in their work which can affect their future prospects