

## **Model Attendance Policy Barley Lane**

**2021-2022**

### **School Attendance Policy**

**Barley Lane** seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive an education which enables them to maximise opportunities for each child to reach his or her full potential. Research shows there is evidence of a strong link between good attendance and increased attainment. Pupils who regularly attend school make much better progress both socially and academically. Regular attendance enables pupils to adapt better to routines, school work and friendship groups. As a consequence those pupils will have a positive experience of learning and have more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond to further education and training.

**Barley Lane** aims to work in partnership with parents and other agencies and will actively promote and encourage every child reaching 100% attendance to ensure that each child can get the best out of the educational opportunities provided.

By working in partnership with parents and other agencies we are able to ensure that we have clear and robust strategies in place to manage and promote regular attendance, for all students at **Barley Lane**.

### **In order to manage and promote regular attendance Barley lane will:**

- Keep parents updated on the **Barley Lane's** overall attendance and individual pupil's attendance, via letters home, newsletters, social media the website.
- Follow the DfE and Government guidance in relation to school attendance and COVID-19.
- Follow Public Health guidance should any local lockdowns or outbreaks in school occur.
- Report to parents how their child is achieving in school and how their child's attendance is impacting on this, via regular parent evenings.
- Monitor individual students attendance in order to:

a) Celebrate good and improved school attendance and reward this through competitions, certificates and events/insert own Attendance Celebrations

b) Notify parents when we are worried about their child's attendance by following the school procedures.

### **Parental responsibilities to help manage and promote the regular attendance of their children:**

- Understand their legal responsibilities by ensuring regular school attendance with regard to the Section 444(1) and 444 (1A) Education Act 1996 and Section 36 of the Children Act 1989.
- Understand their responsibility to keep **Barley Lane** up to date with at least 2 emergency contact details as required by the Children Missing Education requirements and in line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2018.

- Impress on their children the importance of regular school attendance by keeping absences to a minimum and ensuring that children are only out of school when they are too sick to attend.
- Establish effective communication with the school and swiftly address any worries their children may have about coming to school, so that we can work together to resolve this.
- Contact the school on every day of absence to inform school of reason for absence and when the child is expected to return keeping school informed if the absence is likely to continue so that school and partner agencies can ensure that amendments or alternatives can be made to provision if required.
- Provide the school with any medical appointment cards and where possible make appointments out of school hours. If this is not possible parents should ensure that children attend prior to or following their appointment.
- Attend any meetings called by the school and partner agencies to discuss attendance.

### **Registration periods for Barley Lane**

- On Monday each week the school opens at 10.30am and registration begins
- From Tuesday to Friday each week school opens at 9.00am – 9.30am students arrive at school
- 1.30pm – 1.45pm – Afternoon registration
- Pupil's arriving after 10am will be recorded in the registers as being late. (L). The Headteacher will be notified and a course of action identified, with contact being made by the office staff
- Pupil's arriving after 10.15am will be recorded as unauthorised late. (U) which is an unauthorised absence for the whole session. The Headteacher will be notified and absence procedures will be followed as noted below.
- Concerns relating to attendance and/or punctuality should initially be discussed with the Head teacher or school attendance officer.

**Punctuality is a critical factor in the smooth running of a school, not only because arriving late for class has a disruptive effect for both staff and students, but also installing an ethos of good timekeeping is important for pupils later in life, especially when embarking on employment or further education.**

### **Absences**

Parents are expected to inform school of the reason for absences, however, it is school that makes the decision whether to authorise or unauthorise the absence. School will make this decision based on the information available to them. Parents are encouraged to provide as much information as possible and information such as appointment cards, medication or application for leave of absence will assist school in making this decision.

If you have concerns about your child's attendance you must contact the school as it is proven that earlier intervention creates a higher chance of resolution.

## **Request for leave of absence in term time**

Barley Lane have adopted the Local Authority code of conduct (September 2019) in respect of leave of absence in term time. All parents who wish to take their child out of school for any reason (other than medical reasons) should complete a leave of absence request form. Authorisation will only be given in exceptional circumstances, and at the discretion of the Head teacher. If parents proceed with the leave of absence in term time, Barley Lane may refer to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice. Penalty notices may be issued due to the deliberate taking of leave of absence in term time without or against school permission, (where it can be demonstrated that the parent/carer understood that permission had not or would not be given), and where this has created a period of unauthorised absence of at least 10 sessions.

## **Appointments**

We encourage parents to make Doctors or Dentist appointments outside of school hours, however we do appreciate that sometimes this is not possible and you must inform the school as soon as you have an appointment booked.

## **Barley Lane procedure for following up attendance concerns.**

Barley Lane has a duty to keep you informed if at any time we start to become concerned of absences. The procedure we follow is below, but you not must wait for a letter from us if you wish to talk about any concerns you have about your child's attendance;

92%            We will phone to explore if there are any concerns around attendance

90%            Green letter (Letter 1)

87-88%       Amber letter (Letter 2) offering a meeting in school.

An Early Help leaflet will be enclosed with this letter and can be discussed further at the meeting.

85%            Red Letter (Letter 3) including asking for Medical Evidence

80%            Letter 4- final warning/Referral to the Education Welfare Service where criteria has been met.

Consideration is always given to any medical or educational needs of the child. This will be explored with you during the attendance processes. We must stress that our aim will always be to support you and your child in improving attendance. However we understand that sometimes this does not work, therefore we may need to have a discussion and possibly refer to the Education Welfare Service as to the next steps.

## **What if attendance does not improve for your child?**

Barley lane may contact the Education Welfare Service to support you and the school in managing and promoting regular attendance of your child. This could involve:

- An introductory Letter expressing concern
- Exploratory supportive meetings to ensure all concerns and worries have been considered by the school. The Education Welfare Officer will assess your family and child's needs and help you resolve matters of poor attendance.
- These meetings may include suggesting Outside Agencies that may be able to help you and your child.
- Agencies could include:
  - Early Help
  - Child and adolescent mental health service
  - Social Care
  - 0-25 team
  - Public Health Nursing
  - Any other agencies that seem appropriate
- Home Visits

## **Role of Education Welfare Officer in Promoting Attendance**

- The Education Welfare Officer will work closely with the Head teacher and Attendance Officer in order to promote positive attendance with both students and families
- The Education Welfare Officer will meet regularly with the Head teacher and Attendance Officer in order to efficiently identify concerns

Monitoring where students are:- The young people in our care can react inappropriately and impulsively, it is very important we are aware of their movements we will therefore make the following checks:-

- On arrival staff meet with taxis each morning and the transport officer notes any absentees
- The Head teacher or senior colleague meets and greets every student who arrives
- At our morning meeting the register is taken by the school's Attendance Officer or member of staff and clarity is sought on any late arrivals or those arriving still on public transport, those learning off-site and any missing students
- The register is given to the Attendance Officer and calls are made home to ensure all absences are explained and legitimate and every pupil is accounted for.
- All absences are recorded in the Absence Book and signed off by a SMT. Once all are confirmed it is added to the governments website.
- School will only accept reasons for absence from the parent/carer with parental responsibilities. Direct contact should be made with the school and information will not be taken from other sources i.e taxi drivers or the child themselves.

- If parents/carers cannot be contacted at the beginning of the day reasonable attempts will be made by the school to contact the parent/carer to establish a reason for absence. (This could be via telephone calls, text messages and email)
- Where there is genuine concern for a child's absence and no reasonable contact has been made by the parent/carer it may be necessary for the school to contact the Police to undertake a Welfare Check.

School staff will check class lists against the absence lists regularly throughout the day in order to identify any missing pupil's during the school day. These should be carried out as described below:-

- Teachers in each class/lesson should check that any absences from their class are authorised or explained and must be satisfied that the child is safe and his whereabouts known and approved and can do so using the walkabout support team and their walkie talkie
- Unauthorised or unexplained absences from class must be reported promptly to the duty teacher via the 'walkabout' and teachers must be able to explain absences.
- Staff will check pupil's against the lunch seating plan to ensure pupil's are accounted for.
- Staff will be vigilant when pupil's are moving around the school site and will notify the SMT or Attendance Officer if there is a concern around a missing student.
- The end of the day meeting or dispersal to taxis should include a discreet final check to ensure students are accounted for at day's end.

**In situations where all other strategies have failed to improve school attendance, the Education Welfare Service will enforce Section 444(1) and 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996 and the Children Act 1989, which may result in a fine up to £2,500; a Parenting Order; a community order; or a custodial sentence. Consideration will also be given to the issuing of a Penalty Notice in case of unauthorised absence where appropriate**  
[School absence penalty notices: code of conduct - Education and Families \(devon.gov.uk\)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/education/school-absence-penalty-notice-code-of-conduct)

## **Safeguarding**

Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility. The Attendance Policy has a direct link to safeguarding policy; the behaviour policy; anti-bullying strategies and the Health and Safety Policy.

**Barley Lane** have also adopted the Local Authority Policies on Children Missing Education, Elective Home Education. The Barley Lane also follow Local Authority guidance in relation to coding absence for families who travel as part of their culture.

All these policies have been endorsed by our governing body, which support the school in all attempts to improve the attendance and safeguarding agenda.

During the Covid pandemic we are following Government guidance in terms of attendance.

Signed Chair Of Governors.....

Headteacher.....

Date.....