

# BARTON PRIMARY SCHOOL AND EARLY YEARS CENTRE.



## Attendance Policy

DATE: April 2011

TO BE REVIEWED: April 2012

Signed..... Chair of Governors

Date.....



## **1. Introduction**

1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

1.2 Under the *Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995* the Governing Body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

## **2. Definitions**

### **2.1 Authorised Absence**

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell and the parent writes a note or telephones the school to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

### **2.2 Unauthorised absence**

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of the school and a parent.
- Therefore the absence is unauthorised if the child is away from school without good reason even with the support of parent.

## **3. If a child is absent**

3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly the class teacher will record the absence in the register. Registers are checked in the school office and staff will endeavour to contact a parent or guardian if the parent has not informed the school.

3.2 When the child returns to school a note should be brought from a parent or guardian to explain the absence.

3.3 A note may be sent to the school office prior to the day of absence. For example, if a child has a medical appointment.

3.4 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian in order to check on the safety of the child.

#### **4. Requests for leave of absence**

4.1 We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions so that they can make the most progress possible. However, we do understand that there are circumstances where a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child to attend, for example, a special event. We expect parents to contact the school at least a month in advance but normally this request will be granted dependant on the % attendance

4.2 A Leave of Absence in Term Time request form will need to be filled in. The school pre populates with data pertaining to the child's attendance to date and the reason for the request must be given.

See Appendix 1. Leave of Absence Form

#### **5. Long term absence**

5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over 5 days the school will do all it can to send material home so that they can keep up with their school work.

5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services so that

arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

## **6. Repeated unauthorised absences**

6.1 If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve the school will then contact the LA support services.

Social services will be contacted if a child on the Child Protection register has not attended school and no contact has been received.

6.2 The governors, supported by the Local Authority, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

## **8. Attendance targets**

8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic and based on attendance figures achieved in the previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets.

## **9. Monitoring and review**

9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance and they will request an annual report from the headteacher. The Governing Body also has responsibility for this policy and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.

9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported at a Full Governors meeting at least once each term.

9.4 The Office manager is responsible for monitoring attendance and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence they will contact the Headteacher. Monthly attendance reports are produced by the Office Manager and discussed with the Headteacher. Appropriate action is taken.

1. Letters to Parents/Carers
2. Meetings with Parents/Carers
3. Referral to Education Welfare

All attendance registers and reports are regularly checked by Education Welfare.

9.5 This policy is reviewed by the Governing Body annually