



# The Downland Federation Primaries' Attendance Policy

**Date of last review: March 2024**

**Date of next review: March 2025**

**Version: 4**

**Monitoring and Evaluation:** Attendance figures are reported to governors on a termly basis.

**The Downland Federation is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of its students and young people**

**Status: Statutory**, (linked to attendance target setting)

**Purpose:**

To ensure that all staff at Basildon, Beedon and Compton CE Primary Schools are fully aware and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

- To encourage maximum student attendance by valuing high attendance rates.
- To monitor attendance rates for each student to ensure that they take full advantage of their educational opportunity by attending regularly.
- To identify the factors which influence student attendance and work in partnership with parents, the Educational Welfare Service and other support agencies to address difficulties and improve attendance.

**Consultation:**

Staff and governors were consulted on the Attendance Policy.

**Relationship to other policies:**

See Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, Behaviour and Health and Safety.

**Roles and responsibilities of school leaders /Director of Primaries, staff, students and governors:**

All stakeholders should be aware of their responsibilities in promoting attendance within the schools.

- Governors will ensure the effective and rigorous implementation and monitoring of the policy and have a duty, along with the Headteacher, to report on attendance figures.
- The Director of Primaries and school leaders are responsible for the strategic overview of attendance throughout the primary schools.
- Students learn best when they have good attendance. This can be achieved when expectations of attendance are high and staff follow the school systems when dealing with attendance issues. The school systems range from the use of the school email and text system/regular phone calls to parents, to the use of fixed penalty notices in more extreme cases.
- Parents have a responsibility to report their child's absence on the first day.
- All staff have a responsibility for monitoring levels of attendance and acting upon any concerns.
- The work of the school staff and external agencies should be effectively co-ordinated by the /Director of Primaries, school leaders
- All instances of absence are followed up as soon as practicably possible and that long term strategies for improving the attendance of individual students are enacted.
- Students with poor attendance should be offered the support of the school to improve their attendance. The Director of Primaries and school leaders will co-ordinate this support.
- Parents and students should understand that the schools cannot authorise requests for term time absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. All requests for term time absence must be made using the 'Leave of Absence Form', available in reception, at least three weeks before the leave of absence is due to take place. Parents will be informed in writing about the outcome of their request for leave of absence.
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure the regular and punctual attendance of their child at school unless the absence has been authorised by the school. West Berkshire has provided a leaflet on this, copies of which are available from the schools.
- Fixed penalty notices will be issued, according to West Berkshire Code of Conduct, in respect of unauthorised absence from school and the presence in public of excluded pupils during the first five days of exclusion.

### **Guidance for Staff on Attendance:**

- The importance of attendance will be highlighted to prospective parents and communicated to parents through regular entries in the parent newsletter and at parents' evenings.
- Attendance will be reviewed in a termly report produced by the Director of Primaries for the SLT and Governors.
- The attendance of individual students will be discussed regularly with the Executive Headteacher and the Education Welfare Officer.
- Attendance issues will be discussed weekly at SMT meetings.
- Letters will be sent to parents when a student's absence drops below 93%.
- Additional letters will be sent to parents when a student's absence drops below 90% and the student becomes a persistent absentee; in most cases the student will also be put on an attendance plan, in which the student will be given clear targets for improving attendance.
- If the Attendance Plan targets are not met, the schools may decide to impose Fixed Penalty Notices in accordance with DFE guidance.
- Students with low attendance will be provided with appropriate support, including the intervention of the Education Welfare Officer.

### **Guidance for Parents on Attendance:**

#### **Why is good attendance so important?**

Good attendance is essential in order for students to make sustained academic progress and also for students to feel that they are active members of the school community, involved not only in lessons but also in the extra-curricular activities that are so important for their wellbeing.

We become very concerned when a student's attendance falls below 90% (measured from the beginning of the academic year):

- Students who have attendance below 90% are persistent absentees from school
- 90% attendance equates to half a day missed every week
- 90% attendance in one school year equates to 4 whole weeks of lessons missed in that year
- 90% attendance over 5 years of school equates to half a year of school missed

For these reasons the schools will work very closely with the parents and carers of students who have low attendance to get to the root of the problem and provide support to help the attendance improve.

In accordance with the West Berkshire Code of Conduct, we also use fixed penalty fines when students have unauthorised absences from school. Circumstances under which fixed penalty fines can be issued are as follows. More detailed information on the Code of Conduct is available on the West Berkshire website.

- Where a pupil is present in a public place during the first 5 days of being excluded from school
- Where the pupil has had 10 or more school days of unauthorised absence within any 10 week school period
- Where a pupil has had 5 or more school days of unauthorised absence in a 10 week school period and the unauthorised absence relates to a planned leave of absence e.g. holiday.

#### **What should I do if my child is unable to come to school due to illness?**

Should your child be unavoidably absent from school, such as because of illness, can you please inform the school in the following ways.

1. By telephone – please use the absence line option on the school answerphones. Basildon 01491671445 Beedon 01635 248284. Compton 01635 578240.
2. Via email [office@beedon.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:office@beedon.w-berks.sch.uk) or [office@compton.w-berks.sch.uk](mailto:office@compton.w-berks.sch.uk)  
[absent@basildonprimary.org.uk](mailto:absent@basildonprimary.org.uk)
3. In person when dropping off siblings at school.

Please ensure that your messages reach the school by .9.10am. In the case of illness, please contact the school each morning of absence to ensure that your child's absence record is correct. Please also use

these methods of communication to inform the school if your child needs to be absent due to medical or dental appointments.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason apart from illness or medical/dental appointment, a Planned Leave of Absence form must be obtained from the school office.

If you have a concern about your child's attendance, please contact his or her class teacher or, in more serious cases, Director of Primaries and school leaders