

Barton Seagrave Primary School

Attendance Policy: September 2025

1. Introduction

At Barton Seagrave Primary School, we believe that regular and punctual attendance is essential for a child's education and future success. We are committed to working with parents and carers to ensure all pupils attend school regularly and on time.

This policy outlines the school's expectations, procedures, and the legal framework governing pupil attendance.

2. Expectations and Definitions

The **Education Act 1996** requires parents to ensure their child receives an efficient, full-time education. Pupils are expected to attend school for the entire academic year unless there is an exceptional reason for absence.

- **Authorised Absence:** Absence approved by the school, typically for reasons like genuine illness, medical appointments (when unavoidable), or other exceptional circumstances.
- **Unauthorised Absence:** Absence that has not been approved by the school. This includes lateness after the register closes, holidays taken without permission, or unexplained absences.

Please be aware that informing the school of an absence does not automatically make it authorised. The school reserves the right to request medical evidence for repeated absences, absences prior to or post a leave of absence or absence that has resulted in a low attendance percentage. Minor ailments like a slight cold or headache are generally not considered acceptable reasons for absence.

3. Registration and Lateness

The school day begins with morning registration.

- **Registration Times:** Registers are taken twice daily, in the morning at **8:50 a.m.** and in the afternoon at **1:20 p.m.**
- **Lateness:** Any child arriving after **8:50 a.m.** will be marked as late. The parent or carer must sign them in at the school reception via the Inentry screen and provide a reason.
- **Unauthorised Lateness:** Any child arriving after **9:10 a.m.** will be marked as an **unauthorised absence (U)** for that session.

- **Persistent Lateness:** If a pupil is consistently late, the school will contact parents to resolve the issue.

We ask parents to schedule dental and medical appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. If a child must leave during the school day for an appointment, parents must inform the school office and the class teacher, provide confirmation of the appointment, and sign the child out at reception.

4. Absence Procedures

Parents should contact the school by **9 a.m. on the first day of a child's absence** via telephone or email at **attendance@bartonseagraveprimary.co.uk**. The message should include the child's name, class, and the reason for the absence. If the reason is illness, please provide symptoms to help us monitor any illnesses within the school.

- If no contact is made by 9 a.m., the school will send an email/SchoolComms app message to ascertain the child's whereabouts. If we do not receive a reason for absence, this will automatically be unauthorised.
- For repeated absences, the school may require medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, appointment slip, or prescription.
- The school is not responsible for any costs incurred by parents for obtaining this information.

Register Codes

The following codes are used on the school registers to record attendance.

Code	Description	Meaning
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated Off-site	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances	Authorised Absence
C1	Leave for Regulated Performance	Authorised Absence
C2	Leave for Part-Time Timetable	Authorised Absence
D	Dual Registration	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no provision)	Authorised Absence
F	Extended Agreed Holiday	Authorised Absence
G	Unauthorised Holiday	Unauthorised Absence

Code	Description	Meaning
I	Illness (non-medical appointment)	Authorised Absence
J1	Interview	Approved Education Activity
K	LA-Arranged Provision	Authorised Absence

Code	Description	Meaning
L	Late (before registers close)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved education absence
Q	Unable to attend due to lack of access arrangements	Authorised Absence
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised Absence
T	Gypsy/Roma Traveller absence	Authorised Absence
U	Late after registers close	Unauthorised Absence
V	Educational visit	Approved education absence
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
Y1	Unable to attend due to usual transport not available	Authorised absence
Y2	Unable to attend due to widespread travel disruption	Authorised absence
Y3	Unable to attend due to part of school premises being closed	Authorised absence
Y4	Unable to attend due to whole school closure	Authorised absence
Y5	Unable to attend as pupil in criminal justice system	Authorised absence
Y6	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law	Authorised Absence

Code	Description	Meaning
Y7	Unable to attend due to other unavoidable causes	Authorised Absence
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not applicable
#	School closed to pupils (planned)	Not applicable

5. Leave of Absence During Term Time

Government regulations state that Head Teachers can no longer grant leave of absence during term time unless there are '**exceptional circumstances**', such as a family crisis, the funeral of a close relative, or an entrance exam. **Holidays are not considered exceptional circumstances.**

- **How to Request Leave:** Requests must be submitted at least two weeks in advance using the official google form, which is available on the school website.
- **Unauthorised Leave:** If a leave of absence is taken without authorisation, the school may refer the absence to the Local Authority's **Education Entitlement Service**.

Penalty Notices are issued by North Northamptonshire County Council. At Barton Seagrave Primary School, we follow the Northamptonshire Code of Conduct and refer parents when a pupil has a minimum of 10 school sessions recorded as unauthorised in a 10 week school period; a school day is two sessions (morning and afternoon).

Please visit:

<https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/attendance-behaviour-and-homeschooling/attendance-and-behaviour-support-parents/penalty-notices> for more information.

Parents are also asked to note:

- Barton Seagrave Primary School Attendance Policy fully complies with Government regulations. Statutory guidelines state "Headteachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances".
- The school may seek advice from North Northants Council and liaise with the head teachers of the schools' any siblings attend.
- Requests for leave in exceptional circumstances should be made at least 2 weeks in advance of the event.
- Retrospective approval for absence cannot be granted. Parents do not have the right of appeal if a request for a leave of absence is declined, the head teacher's decision is final.
- Leave of absence will NOT be granted for pupils who are at a level of persistent absence (less than 90%) or where attendance/punctuality are a concern.
- Leave of absence will NOT be granted during periods of public examinations or internal school assessments.
- Leave of absence will NOT be granted for holidays during term time regardless of circumstances.

- Where leave of absence is NOT authorised, and parents decide to take pupils out of school despite the notice (fine).
- If the school grants a leave of absence request and subsequently obtains evidence that indicates an application was falsified, the school reserves the right to amend the child's attendance records to record the absence as unauthorised and apply for the issuing of a fixed penalty notice or if a child is unwell before or after a leave of absence, this will be marked as unauthorised and a penalty notice issued unless the illness is evidenced.
- Where a pupil fails to return to school after an agreed period of leave of absence, absence will be recorded as unauthorised, a fixed penalty notice (fine) requested, and they may be reported to the Local Authority as 'A Child Missing in Education' and potentially lose their place at the school.
- Schools are under no obligation to provide work for pupils who are absent from school, unless parents/carers have received a licence from the LA for their child to take part in sporting/arts/theatre events as part of professional organisation, as detailed above

6. Penalty Notices

Unauthorised absences may result in a **Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN)**, issued by North Northamptonshire County Council.

- **Criteria:** An FPN may be issued when a pupil has a minimum of **10 school sessions (5 school days)** recorded as unauthorised within a 10-week period.
 - **Cost:** As of August 19, 2024, the fine is **£80 per parent per child** if paid within 21 days. This increases to **£160** if paid between 22 and 28 days.
 - **Legal Action:** Failure to pay the FPN may result in prosecution at the Magistrates Court, which could lead to a criminal conviction and/or a fine of up to **£1,000**.
 - **Repeat Offences:** A second FPN issued within three years of the first will be a flat rate of **£160**.
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7. Monitoring and Support Systems

The school's attendance target is **96%**, as endorsed by the Department for Education, Ofsted, and the Local Authority.

- **Routine Letters:** Parents will receive a routine letter if their child's attendance falls below 96% at the end of each term.
- **Persistent Absence:** If a child's attendance remains below **90%**, they are classified as a **Persistent Absentee**. This will trigger a series of letters (**Persistent Absentee Letters**) and may lead to a meeting to create a **Parenting Contract**.
- **Parenting Contract:** This is a formal meeting to discuss reasons for poor attendance and set a plan to improve it. The school will set an attendance target of 90-95% for a review period of five school weeks.
- **Further Action:** If attendance does not improve, the school will refer the case to the **Education Entitlement Service (EES)**, which may result in legal action and a fine.

You will receive your child's attendance report annually with their report.

School attendance data is monitored throughout the year with reports taking place termly.

Low attendance letters are sent out throughout the year.

Late reports will also run routinely throughout the year.

Attendance reports for the school as whole will be reviewed at full governors meetings.

Individual attendance is reviewed throughout the year through regular meetings with the EIPT at North Northants Council where there is concern of low attendance.

8. Children Missing from Education (CMFE)

The school follows a strict procedure for pupils whose whereabouts are unknown.

- **Day 1:** The school sends a message/email/makes a phone call to the parent.
 - **Day 2:** A follow-up call is made. A home visit may occur if the child is considered vulnerable.
 - **Day 3-10:** Further attempts to contact the family are made, including written correspondence and a home visit.
 - **Day 10:** If no contact can be made, a CMFE referral is made to the **Education Inclusion Partnership Team (EIPT)**.
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9. Rewarding Good Attendance

We believe in celebrating good attendance and punctuality.

- **99-100% Attendance:** Pupils with 99-100% attendance will receive a special certificate at the end of the academic year.
- **Weekly Trophy:** The class with the best weekly attendance will receive the school attendance trophy and five minutes of extra play. The class is also published on our Barton Bulletin via Facebook, every Friday.

We intend to regularly applaud the children for their attendance throughout the year. You may receive emails or texts congratulating your child on their attendance.

10. Definition of 'Parent'

According to the **Education Act 1996**, a 'parent' includes:

- All natural parents, regardless of marital status.
 - Any person who has parental responsibility for a child.
 - Any person who has care of a child, meaning they live with and look after the child, irrespective of their relationship.
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If you have any questions, please contact the Miss Bell – attendance@bartonseagraveprimary.co.uk. We're here to help you ensure your child gets the best possible education.