

Bhaktivedanta Manor School



Attendance Policy

School Matters!



| Lead | Name | Reviewed Date | Date to Be Reviewed |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Headteacher | W Harrison | May 2017 | September 2018 |
| Chair of Governors | Kartik Khandwala | May 2017 | September 2018 |

At Bhaktivedanta Manor Primary School, it is our culture to support our families in all ways possible. Working as a team, we aim to provide each child every opportunity to achieve their full potential. In order to do this it is essential that all pupils attend school regularly, and on time. To achieve our aims, it is, therefore, our duty to ensure that all parents and guardians understand the importance of regular attendance, the sort of absences we will and will not authorise and the procedures if children need to be absent from school.

It is proven that poor attendance is generally linked to poor performance (progress and attainment) in the classroom. This can result in children struggling with their relationships with their peers, developing low self-confidence and experiencing a disrupted pattern to their education; all of which can be damaging in the long run.

Rewards for Positive Attendance

One of the key benefits of regular attendance is that continuity and progression in learning are ensured.

We promote positive attendance through:

- Individual children, certificates are awarded at the end of each school year for 100% attendance - this is celebrated in the final whole school assembly
- We reward 100% attendance with a certificate given at the end of each term.

Monitoring of Attendance

- Attendance is monitored regularly by teachers and the Head Teacher
- Summary attendance information is reported and discussed at every full governing body meeting, as a standing item on the agenda.

Authorised Absences

An authorised absence – one which the school agrees is a reasonable one – will only be granted for:

1. Child illness
2. Medical appointments
3. External Examinations (e.g. music or dancing exams, entrance exams)
4. Educational assessments conducted by approved agencies
5. Religious observances (e.g. funerals, major festival days in religions other than Hinduism)
6. Educational activity at an alternative site (e.g. participation in a county sports event)
7. Visits to prospective new schools
8. Very special family circumstances

Family holidays may be authorised if your child's attendance meets the Government requirements of **97%**. However, we do understand that statistics do not always tell a full story and past attendance will also be taken into consideration before a final decision is made. The holiday must not exceed 10 school days except in exceptional circumstances, with the permission of the Governing Body.

Unauthorised Absences

An unauthorised absence – absences which the school would not consider reasonable, include:

1. A trip to the theatre
2. Shopping for new shoes
3. Your child staying at home because a parent is ill
4. Having a haircut

All such absences need to be avoided in the interest of ensuring that your child develops a good habit of attending school regularly, allowing them to fulfil their potential academically, socially and emotionally.

Procedures

1. On the first day of and any further absence: If your child is ill or is absent for any reason, please phone or email the School Office for every day of absence, giving your reason for keeping them at home.

2. On your child's return to school: The school has to receive a letter or a signed absence slip (available from the offices) from the parents or guardian for each absence, if not previously reported by phone or email. If we do not have a reason within two weeks, the absence has to be recorded as unauthorised.

If you need to request a period of authorised absence:

If you need to make a request to the Head Teacher for a period of authorised absence, you need to write a letter stating your request to the Head Teacher. Please submit your request to the Head Teacher as early as possible, so that there is time for the request to be considered and for approval to be given if appropriate. Absence will not be authorised during any period of public examinations or internal assessments.

If your child is absent from school more than they should be:

At the end of each term the School Office will analyse absence across the school. As a result of this, some families will receive letters to inform them if their child's absence is lower than it should be if no prior discussion has taken place.

We send letters for the following reasons:

1. Attendance below 90% for the first time - letter sent to parents to say their child's attendance is causing some concern. An appointment with the Head will be offered to discuss ways that the school can offer support in finding a way improve this.
2. Attendance falls below 90% over a second term, with no identifiable reason – Letter sent with a specific appointment given to meet with Head Teacher and begin to address any issues which may be behind this pattern of poor attendance.
3. If, following stages 1 and 2, there has been no significant improvement – Panel Interview arranged with the Head Teacher to plan together for improvements.
4. In the unlikely event of there still being no improvement – The School will inform you that they are not able to authorise any absences without seeing medical evidence that there has been the need for a Doctor's appointment or a prescription has been issued.

The Governing Body has access to attendance figures and unauthorised absence data. If they are unhappy that attendance is not being improved in these extreme cases the Governing Body is likely to take action against families where persistent absence is a problem. The school has a right to fine parents up to £60 per day for unauthorised absences.

We are committed to supporting your child effectively, to ensure that they get the very best education possible and therefore have the best life chances. All challenges made concerning persistent absences, will be handled sensitively and in confidence.

Punctuality

Registration times are at 9am and 2.00pm. It is so important for all children to be on time, as missing the first few minutes of any lesson can be disruptive and unsettling, both for your child and for the rest of the class. If your child arrives in school after that time, they will be marked as absent, so persistent lateness will also affect your child's attendance figures.

There will be a clipboard outside each classroom with a Lateness form. If you child arrives after 9.10 am you must sign and date the lateness form and bring the child yourself into the school (doors will be locked so you will have to knock). If a child is later than 9.10 am more than 2 days a week there will be a fine of £10 to the parents. Obviously we will take into account if there is particularly bad traffic one day due to unforeseen circumstances.

PARENT RESPONSE SLIP

I have read and fully understand the Attendance Policy (reviewed May 2017).

I will make every effort to ensure that my child attends regularly and understand the consequences of sustained and unexplained absence.

Signed _____ Date _____

Child's name _____

Policy Reviewed on May 2017