

# Bishop Perrin Church of England Primary School

## Attendance Policy

Statutory Policy



*Our school is a Church of England School and works in partnership with our two local parish churches, St Augustine's and Ss Philip & James'. We aim to reflect the values, traditions and beliefs of the Christian Faith and therefore our Spiritual Values underpin everything that we do.*

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<b>Date Ratified</b>	October 2019
<b>Ratification Level</b>	Full Governing Body
<b>Frequency of Renewal</b>	Annually
<b>Policy Renewal Date</b>	October 2020

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This policy is in line with the DfE document [Children Missing Education \(2016\)](#) and other relevant legislation and statutory guidance. This policy also follows guidance from Achieving for Children's Children Missing Education Policy and Procedure (May 2019).

A child typically starts school in reception year and must access statutory education from the term after their fifth birthday. The child must remain in statutory education until they are aged 16 or they leave the country.

[Achieving for Children](#) (AfC) is commissioned by Kingston and Richmond Councils to ensure that they meet the councils' statutory duty to arrange suitable full-time education for children of compulsory school age. This includes providing alternative forms of education for children where mainstream inclusion is not appropriate.

We aim to encourage good attendance from every pupil at Bishop Perrin by:

- Informing parents of attendance procedures
- Regularly meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO) to monitor attendance
- Training staff to manage registers
- Identifying concerns with attendance and punctuality at an early stage and taking steps to address these.

Poor or late attendance can significantly affect a child's learning. At Bishop Perrin we aim to build a working partnership between the family and school to ensure that every child has equal opportunities.

Under [Section 444 of the Education Act 1996](#) and its subsequent amendments, parents of children of compulsory school age are under a legal duty to ensure that their child regularly attends the school at which they are registered. Pupil attendance at Bishop Perrin is monitored very closely and where there is a cause for concern the EWO will become involved which could lead to prosecution. This can happen when attendance falls below 95% (ten school days).

## 2 CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION (CME)

Children are missing from education (CME) when they fail to register with a school or when they fall out of the education system. Their personal circumstances, or those of their families, may contribute to their withdrawal from education and/or their failure to successfully reintegrate.

All children, regardless of their circumstances, are entitled to an education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and any special educational needs they may have. Children missing from, or at risk of missing, education are at risk of

underachieving and becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) in later life. They may also be at risk of abuse or sexual exploitation.

It is important to differentiate between children who are at risk of becoming missing out on education and children who are missing from education or not receiving suitable education. If not attending a mainstream school or independent school, pupils should receive full time education suitable to their age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs. This also applies to children who are being electively home educated.

**Children at risk of becoming missing from education** are children or young people receiving a suitable full time education who due to their circumstances are at a higher risk of becoming missing from education and are more likely to be at risk of harm. Children at risk of becoming missing from education are classified by AfC as:

- **known:** a child at risk of becoming missing from education for whom AfC has been notified that, due to the child's circumstances, they are likely to become missing from education; or
- **unknown:** a child at risk of becoming missing from education about whom AfC has no knowledge.

**Children missing out on education** are children or young people of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll. Children missing from education are classified as:

- **identified and located:** a child missing out from education that has been identified and located by AfC;
- **identified but not located:** a child missing from education that has been identified by AfC, but cannot be located; or
- **unknown:** a child missing from education about whom AfC has no knowledge.

**Children not receiving a suitable education** are classed as not receiving 25 hours of good quality registered provision a week. Where children do not receive this level of education, it is often because they are being educated outside of state maintained or independent schools, for example, at home or in alternative provision. For some pupils who have been out of education for an extended period of time, accessing the full 25 hours is not appropriate and a gradual transition is planned and supported by AfC.

For some children, being educated in mainstream school is not an option. This may be because they have a special educational need or disability, a medical need, are a school refuser, or they have been excluded from school for a fixed period or permanently. For these children alternative education provision is organised by the SEND service if an EHCP is in place, or through the EISS. Some children are electively home educated by their parents or tutors.

When a child is excluded from school, basic provision should begin from the sixth day. For a fixed term exclusion, this is the school's responsibility and for a permanent exclusions it is AfC's responsibility. Schools should ensure that the minimum standard of education is maintained for permanently exclusions up to six days and that no child is at risk of harm whilst not at school.

All cases of children who are children missing education or becoming children missing education should be reported to AfC via the Single Point of Access (SPA).

**Richmond SPA:** 020 8547 5008 or at [spa@richmond.gov.uk](mailto:spa@richmond.gov.uk) (020 8770 5000 for out of hours/weekends)

On receiving notification of a child that is missing education or is at risk of becoming a child missing education, the SPA will check to see whether the child is known to AfC. If they are not, they will create a record on the central system and make a referral to the most appropriate service to respond to the child's needs. If they are known, they will notify the service that is working with the child to let them know they have received information.

For children who have not turned up to school or alternative provision, the SPA will notify the Education Welfare Service (EWS) which will undertake checks to locate the child.

If, in the course of carrying out their role, AfC employees become aware of a child that is missing education or at risk of becoming a child missing education, they should also inform the SPA.

### **3 LOCATING AND TRACKING CHILDREN MISSING FROM EDUCATION**

It is the responsibility of parents to inform the school if their child is going to be absent from school. If a child is absent from school and the school has not been notified by midday as to why, then we will instigate the following procedures:

#### **Day 1**

The school will telephone parents on the first day of absence if there has been no contact by midday as to why their child is absent. A record of the attempts to make contact with parents/guardians will be kept.

The exception to this is if a child who is in Year 5 or Year 6 and who is on the school's "Walk to School" Register has not arrive by 9.15am. If this happens, then the School Office will telephone the contacts on the Emergency Contact Form as soon as possible to find out the reason for the absence.

#### **Day 2**

If by the second day of absence without notification for the reason and without having been able to establish contact with parents on Day 1, regardless of which class a child is in, the school will contact other adults who are listed on the

school's Emergency Contact Form to ascertain the whereabouts of the missing child. This will be done before midday.

### **Day 3**

If there has been no contact with parents/guardians or adults listed on the Emergency Contact Form by the beginning of the third day of absence, the school will notify the Educational Welfare Service.

If at any stage the school has concerns regarding the child's welfare we will contact the SPA immediately

If the school makes contact with the child or the child returns to school, but no satisfactory explanation is provided, we will register the child as at risk of becoming missing from education by contacting the SPA.

If the child is found to be in elective home education (EHE), we will ensure that written confirmation is received from the parent or caregiver and then notify AfC. If a parent or carer reports that a child has moved to a new school, we will remove the child from the school roll once we have received confirmation that the child has been placed elsewhere by their new school and the EWS.

### **Days 3 to 20**

If a child is absent for three consecutive days without any explanation, we will notify AfC by contacting the SPA. The SPA will refer the case to the EWS who will undertake the following actions to try and locate the child:

- make contact with the parent, relatives and neighbours using known contact details
- check local databases within the local authority
- check Key to Success or school2school (s2s) systems
- follow local information sharing arrangements and where possible make enquiries via other local databases and agencies e.g. those of housing providers, school admissions, health services, police, refuge, Youth Justice Services, children's social care, and HMRC
- check with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and/or the Border Force
- check with agencies known to be involved with family
- check with local authority and school from which child moved originally, if known
- check with any local authority and school to which a child may have moved
- check with the local authority where the child lives, if different from where the school is
- in the case of children of Service Personnel, check with the [Ministry of Defence \(MoD\) Children's Education Advisory Service](#) (CEAS)

- home visit(s) made by appropriate team, following local guidance concerning risk assessment and if appropriate make enquiries with neighbour(s) and relatives

This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive, and so local authorities and schools should treat each case on its individual merits and use their judgement, ensuring they have taken into account all of the facts of the case.

If the child is located, AfC will inform the school and relevant partner agencies and explain what actions should be taken.

If the child has moved to another Borough, the EWS should confirm with the relevant local authority that the child is now living in and attending school in their Borough and contact the school to confirm this. Once confirmation has been received, the EWS will give permission for the Kingston or Richmond school to remove the child from their roll, upload or send the child's records to the new school and complete the online form.

### **Day 20**

If, after 20 days of unauthorised absence following investigation by the EWS, the school is unable to establish the whereabouts and location of the child, permission will be given by the EWS for the school to remove the child from their roll, where there are no immediate safeguarding concerns. The school will then upload the child's records onto the School2School database as a child missing from education and complete the online form.

## **4 REGISTERS**

Registers are legal documents and teachers are responsible for the information they record on them. They are the recognised system in the school for monitoring attendance and punctuality and are completed at the start of each morning and afternoon. Registers are completed on Integris, which is the school's Management Information System (MIS).

Children are listed in alphabetical order by surname and the register is updated when either a child leaves the school or joins the school.

Children who arrive after the register has been taken, but before 9am are coded with a 'L' for being late. Arrivals after 9am are coded with a "U" meaning that it is an unauthorised absence. Late arrivals also sign in a Late Book that is held in the school office. A senior member of staff will address the issue of persistent lateness with a child's parents. If there is no improvement in a child's punctuality, the school may refer the child to the EWS.

For absence through illness, parents are asked to telephone the school on the first day that their child is absent. They are also required to write a note explaining the absence on the first day that the child returns to school. This is kept in the child's portfolio which is stored in the school office.



For planned absences, such as attending an interview at a secondary school, parents are asked to inform the school in writing in advance of the absence. It is at the discretion of the Headteacher whether longer absences for reasons other than illness would be authorised.

The school does not authorise any holidays taken during term time and regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval for this type of absence.

Codes for absences are recorded on Integris using the appropriate guidelines. All absences are coded, otherwise they count as an unauthorised absence.

## **5 MONITORING AND REPORTING ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

The school office staff and Headteacher monitor children's attendance and punctuality.

Where there is cause for concern, the Headteacher may speak with the child's parents or send a letter indicating that the child's attendance is being monitored. This may be discussed at meetings with the EWO.

Where attendance causes significant concern, individual cases are referred to the EWO for action, which would initially include support to overcome any barriers to regular attendance through a wide range of intervention strategies.

Where improvements are not made, the EWS may decide that it is appropriate to issue a [Fixed Penalty Notice](#), which is a fine payable by the parents. This action would only be taken where it is felt that parental co-operation is either absent or insufficient to resolve the presenting problem. They are intended for use where it is likely they will have a successful outcome in securing an improvement and enforcing regular attendance. Any Fixed Penalty Notices would be issued in line with the LA's Penalty Notice Code of Conduct.

Attendance information is also reported to AfC and Department for Education.

The school celebrates good attendance by awarding children with 100% absence certificates at the end of each term and academic year. We also reward classes where there are no 'lates' each week and announce this in our Celebration Worship on Fridays.

Both attendance and punctuality are reported to parents formally at the end of each academic year via the annual school report.

## **6 AUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for the child to be absent or where an explanation offered afterwards has been accepted as satisfactory justification for absence. Absence may generally be authorised for the following reasons:

- illness, medical or dental appointments;
- days of religious observance;
- exclusion;
- traveller child travelling for the purposes of parents employment
- family bereavement;
- involvement in a public performance (theatre/sporting event);
- attending an Open Morning when viewing secondary schools for Year 6 pupils.
- 'exceptional' occasions (the nature of such occasions will be determined by school on an individual basis)

## **7 UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE**

Unauthorised absence is where no explanation has been given for the child's absence or where the explanation offered is considered by the school to be unacceptable.

Absence will not normally be authorised in the following circumstances:

- Where no explanation is offered by the parent/carer;
- Where the explanation offered is deemed by the school to be unsatisfactory (e.g. shopping, minding the house, etc);
- For family holidays or visits, both in this country and abroad, whether or not the school has been notified in advance

There may be truly exceptional circumstances where the school would normally not authorise the absence but applies discretion to do so. The nature of such occasions will be determined by school on an individual basis.

## **8 HOME SCHOOLING**

If a parent chooses to home school their child, they will be taken off the Bishop Perrin roll once written notification has been received from the parent. On receiving written notification from a parent that they will be home schooling their child/ren, then Bishop Perrin will make a referral to SPA to notify them of this.

## 9 KEY SERVICES

Below is a list of key services that are involved in ensuring children are supported in receiving a suitable education.

### **Education Welfare Service**

The [Education Welfare Service](#) (EWS) has statutory responsibility for monitoring the attendance of pupils who attend state maintained schools within Kingston and Richmond. All schools receive the support of an allocated officer. The EWS works with schools and other key services to identify, locate and track any children missing education or at risk of missing education. The EWS also has responsibility for monitoring the quality of education being provided to children who are electively home educated and to take action when evidence suggests that the education they are receiving is not suitable for their age, ability, aptitude and any specific needs they may have.

### **Education Inclusion**

The [Education Inclusion Support Service](#) (EISS) supports primary aged pupils who have been permanently excluded; and primary and secondary aged pupils who are at risk of exclusion from school. The EISS team support primary aged pupils who are missing education, including those who have medical needs and cannot attend school; those who have special educational needs but are not appropriately placed; and those pupils who are between placements. Malden Oaks is the service provider for secondary aged pupils who are missing education for the same reasons. The service also includes specialist practitioners and support staff who work with both primary and secondary aged pupils, their families, schools and other professional partners to sustain appropriate educational placements and , where necessary, support reintegration into school.

### **Family Support Team**

The [Family Support Team](#) offers support and help to families for children aged 5 to 19. This support includes:

- addressing difficulties with a child's habits or behaviours
- building confidence in dealing with difficult parenting issues
- helping to motivate children and encourage good attendance at school
- improving relationships between family members
- signposting to support agencies

The Family Support Team works within the cluster model and will contact a family within three working days if a referral to them has been made and will make a visit to the family within seven working days. If an assessment is made that the family is in crisis, more immediate interventions and support will be provided.

## **10 OTHER ASSOCIATED POLICIES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- [Bishop Perrin Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [AfC's Children Missing Education Policy and Procedure](#)

## **11 MONITORING**

This policy is reviewed on a regular basis by the Senior Leadership Team and the Safeguarding Governor. It will also be updated and revised sooner in light of any change in guidance or legislation