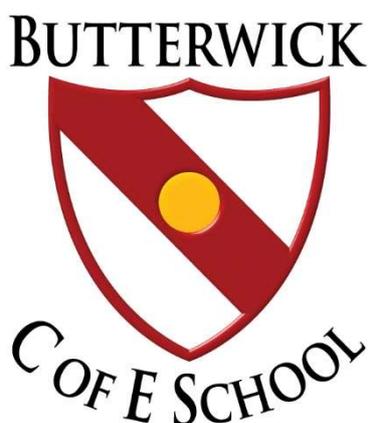


# BUTTERWICK PINCHBECK'S ENDOWED CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL



## Policy on Whole School Attendance

*As an inclusive Christian school, our vision is to provide a safe, happy, loving and nurturing environment where individuals feel valued and are encouraged to fulfil their hopes and aspirations. Through an inspiring and enriched curriculum, pupils are given the best opportunities to flourish and develop their God given talents.*

*'With God all things are possible' Matthew 19:26*

*Together Everyone Achieves More*

**Date Agreed:** July 2021

**Date to be reviewed:** July 2024

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### 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
- [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the [school census](#), which explains the persistent absence threshold.

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 The governing board**

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Attendance Governor is responsible for working with the Learning Mentor to monitor attendance and report back to the governing board on a termly basis.

### **3.2 The headteacher**

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school
- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

### **3.3 The attendance officer**

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

### **3.4 Class teachers**

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

### **3.5 School office staff**

School office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

## **4. Recording attendance**

### **4.1 Attendance register**

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 08.50am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 09.00am and will be kept open until 09.25am.

#### **4.2 Unplanned absence**

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence by 09.30am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

Parents/carers are required to notify the school on either the school telephone number (01205) 760256 or school email address [enquiries@butterwick.lincs.sch.uk](mailto:enquiries@butterwick.lincs.sch.uk) to advise that their child is absent from school and the reason why on every occasion they are absent. If no contact is made, the absence will be recorded as **unauthorised** and a member of the office staff will contact the parent/carer for a reason for the absence. The school will make a decision as to whether an absence should be authorised after contact has been made.

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

#### **4.3 Planned absence**

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance and provides evidence of the appointment.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

#### **4.4 Lateness and punctuality**

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

How our school identifies and responds to ongoing punctuality issues:

- Close monitoring of those children who are persistently late for school.
- Contact parents/carers by letter outlining the number of times the child has been late to school including an attendance summary sheet.
- Invite parents/carers in for a meeting to try to resolve any issues, working with both the parents/carers and the child to make improvements to their punctuality.
- Early Help intervention/Team Around the Child.
- Student Attendance Panels which would involve the Attendance Governor.

#### **4.5 Following up absence**

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason by contacting them by telephone or email. If we are unsuccessful contacting them by telephone or email then a home visit may be carried out.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents**

The school will establish an effective system of communication with pupils and parents/carers to support good attendance and timekeeping and to provide appropriate information and advice. This will include letters advising of target attendance figures for pupils with low attendance and persistent lateness.

Parents/carers will be informed termly of pupil attendance levels through attendance cards, annually in their written end-of-year report and at parent/carer consultations.

Attendance information can also be found on the school website.

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

It is a parent's legal duty to ensure that no term time holidays are taken. Should you take your child out of school for a term time holiday, it is important that parents/carers give the school a **minimum** of 14 days' notice. The school also requires parents/carers to provide evidence of your child's absence such as a holiday booking confirmation or flight details. This is a safeguarding issue and all information will be confidential. The absence will be recorded as unauthorised and prompt review of the pupils attendance throughout the academic year will be carried out. Appropriate action will be taken on an individual basis including the use of a fixed penalty notice.

## 5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school procedures for targeting persistent unauthorised absence are:

- Close monitoring of those children who are persistently absent from school.
- Contact parents/carers by letter outlining the child's attendance level including an attendance summary sheet.
- Invite parents/carers in for a meeting to try to resolve any issues, working with both the parents/carers and the child to make improvements to their attendance.
- Early Help intervention/Team Around the Child.
- Student Attendance Panels which would involve the Attendance Governor.

## 5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

## **6. Strategies for promoting attendance**

In order to create a holistic and supportive approach to high attendance the school will conduct any actions in accordance with all relevant and up to date government legislation.

The school will emphasise the importance of attendance in a variety of ways including PSHE, assemblies, attendance cards and the attendance policy can be accessed on the school website.

The school will recognise high attendance levels and celebrate this on a whole school and individual level. Termly prize draws for high attending pupils will reward pupils who attend regularly and there will be an additional prize draw at the end of the academic year. Class attendance figures will be disseminated weekly to the whole school through celebration assemblies.

The school will establish an effective system of communication with pupils and parents to support good attendance and timekeeping and to provide appropriate information and advice. This will include letters advising of target attendance figures for pupils with low attendance and persistent lateness.

## **7. Attendance monitoring**

The attendance officer at our school monitors pupil absence on a weekly basis.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

Parents/carers are expected to call the school each day a child is ill.

If a pupil's attendance goes below 95%, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this.

If a pupil's absence continue to rise after contacting their parent/carer by telephone calls and letters, we will consider involving a school attendance panel, an education welfare officer or Children's Services.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Any pupil that has 15% unauthorised absence within any six week period may be subject to a fixed penalty notice.

School staff will work with pupils, parents and other agencies to resolve school related issues which are impacting on a pupil's attendance. If after school based initiatives the level of attendance continues to be unsatisfactory the school will request the involvement of the local Educational Welfare Service.

The school will support the re-integration of pupils after an absence sensitively and involving all staff, and giving access to mentoring services as appropriate.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

The school collects and stores attendance data on the system RM INTEGRIS. The data may be used for internal purposes. For example, to:

- Track the attendance of individual pupils
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Monitor and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support

## 8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum 3 years by the Learning Mentor and Attendance Governor. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

## 9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy

### Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
\	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed

<b>B</b>	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
<b>D</b>	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
<b>J</b>	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
<b>P</b>	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
<b>V</b>	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
<b>W</b>	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>Authorised absence</b>		
<b>C</b>	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
<b>E</b>	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
<b>H</b>	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
<b>I</b>	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
<b>M</b>	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
<b>R</b>	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
<b>S</b>	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
<b>T</b>	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>		
<b>G</b>	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
<b>N</b>	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
<b>O</b>	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
<b>U</b>	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Scenario</b>
<b>X</b>	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
<b>Y</b>	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
<b>Z</b>	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
<b>#</b>	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day