



## Attendance

<b>Written by</b>	Karen Goodall
<b>Verified by</b>	Rachael Stewart
<b>Approved by</b>	School Development Board
<b>Review Date</b>	Autumn Term 2022



## 1. Rationale

- 1.1 In view of the advice received from the Department for Children, Schools and Families this policy has been written to inform staff, governors and parents of the policies and procedures to be followed regarding attendance at school by pupils.
- 1.2 A fundamental element of this school's ethos is that education is a partnership between school, parents and the children.

## 2. Responsibilities

**At Berkeley Primary School we expect pupils to attend every school day that the school is open unless a reason acceptable to the school is given and we are able to authorise the absence**

- 2.1 The staff at Berkeley Primary School accepts responsibility for the effective delivery of the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2. We believe that a child's progress may be seriously affected by irregular attendance, especially as units of work are completed in relatively short periods of time and may not be repeated for another two years. Incomplete knowledge and understanding may only become evident at the time of testing.

For the above reasons, staff and governors urge parents to make every effort to avoid absence by their children during term time and in this regard the school follows the principles outlined by both the LA and DCSF.

- 2.2 Parents are legally required to ensure that their child/children of compulsory school age receive full-time education. If a child is absent for any reason it is the parent's responsibility to inform the school of the reason for the absence in advance. If this is not practicable or possible then the parents must inform the school of the reason for absence by 9.00am on the morning of the absence. Parents will be reminded of their responsibility in this respect in regular newsletters. The school will institute a monitoring system which highlights on the same day any children who are absent without reason being given. Efforts will be made to contact the parents of such children on the first morning of their absence to seek explanations for this absence. If problems persist in this respect then the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) will be informed.
  - 2.3 The school is required to make suitable arrangements for the safe, daily reception of children, to complete a register of attendance in accordance with the Statutory Regulations and to enquire about absence.
  - 2.4 The school is required to take action if patterns of absence by a child indicate that an attendance problem exists. The class teacher will report any concerns over this to the Headteacher who will in turn take action as appropriate involving both the parents and
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the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).

- 2.5 The school has to produce annual statistics about attendance at the school. This information will be reported to parents via the School Profile and the School Prospectus.

### 3. Categories of Absence

- 3.1 The 1993 Education Act states:

The Parent of a child of compulsory school age registered at a school and failing to attend regularly is guilty of a punishable offence, unless it can be demonstrated that:

- the pupil was absent with leave, which can be granted by the Governors of the school or any person delegated by them.
- the pupil was ill or was prevented from attending by any unavoidable cause.
- the absence occurred on a day exclusively set aside for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong.
- the school at which the pupil is registered is not within walking distance of the child's home (2 miles for children under 8 years, and 3 miles for children aged 8 or over, measured by the nearest available route), and that no suitable arrangements have been made by the Local Authority (LA) for the child's transport to and from school.

- 3.2 The decision to authorise absence is delegated to the Headteacher by the Governors.

Absence will generally be granted to parents under the following circumstances, unless in the Headteacher's opinion it is not warranted, in particular, where a regular or noticeable pattern of absence emerges.

**Authorised absence will be shown in the register by the symbol 'O' with a supplementary symbol inside the letter to record the reason for absence.**

Examples of authorised absence are given below:

- **Family holidays:** It is expected that parents make every effort to take family holidays during school holiday time. Family holidays in term time will usually be marked as unauthorised unless there are exceptional circumstances. These must be discussed with the Headteacher.

If the absence request is not authorised and the holiday is taken the Local Authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. A Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases

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to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If the fine is not paid this it may result in legal action.

*In Education Law, (Section 576 of Education Act 1996), 'parent' means: \* All natural parents, whether they are married or not. \* Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil. \* Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child*

Parents will be reminded that they cannot expect to be able to obtain leave for their child whenever they request it.

### **Holiday - Register will be marked 'H'**

- For **family bereavements**: Parents will be asked to give written details of the time required and any other necessary information to the Headteacher to allow a decision to be made.
- **Special One-off occasions or causes**: This category is for truly one-off occasions of particular importance. Parents are asked to give as much notice as possible to allow a decision to be made. Examples of special occasions include: weddings, music or other examination, induction or familiarisation days at secondary schools

Absence for birthday treats will not be authorised.

### **Bereavement, Special One-off occasions - Register will be marked 'C'**

- **Religious Observance**: Details as section 3.1

### **Religious Observance - Register will be marked 'R'**

- Absence for **approved sporting activities** such as attendance at swimming galas, inter-school matches and tournaments will be recorded in the register a 'P'.

### **Approved Sporting Activities – Register will be marked 'P'**

3.3 Leave will not be authorised for the following reasons:

- Shopping trips
- Looking after other children, animals or the house.

## **4. Illness, Medical or Dental Appointments**

4.1 Parents will be reminded annually that in the event of their child being unable to attend school due to illness they are required to telephone as early as possible to give the reason for the absence. In the event of a child being absent and no parental notification being received it is the responsibility of the class teacher to send to the parents concerned a copy of letter contained in Appendix A in an effort to ascertain the

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reason for the child's absence.

- 4.2 Absence for medical or dental appointments will be authorised if the Headteacher is satisfied by the parent's notification of absence. Parents will be asked to make late afternoon or school holiday appointments whenever possible.
- 4.3 If doubts arise about the authenticity of absence attributed to illness, the Headteacher may refer the case to the school medical service for investigation. In exceptional circumstances the Headteacher may ask a child's doctor for a medical certificate as verification for continued or regular absence.

**Illness - Register will be marked 'I', or 'M' in the case of medical appointments (If a telephone call or note is received)**

## **5. Lateness**

- 5.1 The school day begins promptly for the morning session at 8.55 a.m. with registration closing at 9.05 a.m. and the afternoon session at 1.15 p.m.

Registers must be sent to the school office after registration morning and afternoon. If a child arrives after the register has been sent to the school office then the class teacher must ensure that the school secretary is informed so that the register can be amended accordingly.

Parents will be reminded annually of their responsibility to ensure their child/children arrive promptly.

The attendance register will be taken at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions. If a child arrives after this then an "L" will be entered inside the "O" indicating lateness. If a child arrives after registration closes, then a "U" will be entered inside the "O"

Should a pattern of late arrival emerge then the matter will be discussed with the parents and may be followed up with the EWO if appropriate.

The Governors recognise that parents may occasionally have transport problems and the Headteacher will consider each event according to circumstance and the pupil's overall attendance record.

**Lateness - Register will be marked 'L'**

**Lateness (after registration closes) Register will be marked 'U'**

## **6.0 Exclusion**

- 6.1 If a pupil is excluded from school for a fixed or indefinite period then the absence will be recorded using the category E.
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## **Exclusion – Register will be marked 'E'**

### **7.0 Off Site Activities**

7.1 Pupils **off-site on school visits** arranged by the school either residential courses/day trips will be marked as authorised using the category V.

### **Authorised Off-site activity - Register will be marked 'V'**

### **8.0 Review**

This policy will be reviewed during the Autumn Term 2022.

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# BERKELEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Headteacher: Miss Alexandra Robbins

Berkeley Primary School  
Marybrook Street  
Berkeley  
Glos. GL13 9AZ

Tel. 01453 810254  
Fax. 01453 811416  
Email [admin@berkeley.gloucs.sch.uk](mailto:admin@berkeley.gloucs.sch.uk)



[www.berkeleyprimary.org.uk](http://www.berkeleyprimary.org.uk)

Dear Parents,

Reducing absence from school is a key priority nationally and locally because missing school damages a pupil's attainment levels, disrupts school routines and the learning of others. Above all, missing school seriously affects children's longer term life opportunities.

Each year a number of children are absent from school because their parents take them away on holiday during term time.

A pupil's absence can seriously disrupt the continuity of their learning. Not only do they miss the teaching provided on the days they are away; they are also less prepared for lessons upon their return. There is a consequent risk of underachievement, which you and the school must seek to avoid.

Many parents say that the time their child misses because of a holiday doesn't affect their school work. However, a child who has 10 days holiday each year of their school life will miss 24 weeks (a large part of an academic year) of their formal education. This is in addition to unavoidable absences – for instance, if your child is ill.

The school and Education Welfare Service are working together to promote high rates of attendance. Please do not ask for leave of absence for a family holiday in term time if you can possibly avoid it. The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 set out the circumstances in which schools may grant a pupil leave of absence during term time. The school will consider every request individually. However, the most important consideration will be the effect that such an absence would have on your child's education.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Cerullo & Nicki Everhard  
Co Chair of Governors



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**Request for a leave of absence during term time**

Pupil Name .....Class/Tutor Group .....

Pupil's address .....

Date of first day of absence .....Date of return to school .....

Number of school days that your child will be absent from school .....

*If a pupil fails to return within ten school days following the anticipated date of return and no reason is provided, there may be grounds (under some circumstances) to delete your child's name from the Admissions Register and register them as a Child Missing Education.*

Please detail the exceptional circumstance for which you are requesting leave of absence. Please also provide details of where you are travelling to, if outside the UK.

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***I understand that if the absence request is not authorised and the holiday is taken the Local Authority may issue a Fixed Penalty Notice. I understand that a Penalty is issued to each parent for each child taken out of school and that this is a fine of £60 if paid within the first 21 days which increases to £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. I understand that if I do not pay this it may result in legal action.***

Name(s) of Parent/Carer (s) making application:

*In Education Law, (Section 576 of Education Act 1996), 'parent' means: \* All natural parents, whether they are married or not. \* Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or pupil. \* Any person who has care of a child or pupil i.e. lives with and looks after the child*

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Forename.....Surname.....

Address: .....

Signed ..... Dated .....

Dr/Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Forename.....Surname.....

Address: .....

Signed ..... Dated .....

(Please ensure you are giving at least seven days' notice of the proposed absence, retrospective applications cannot be authorised)

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For school to complete and copy retained: AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED (please circle)

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## **APPENDIX D: MARKING OF REGISTERS**

**Registers must be marked at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.**

Summary:

School Registers to be marked using Black ink. Lettering/Circles to be in Red ink.

### **Symbols to be used to record attendance and absence:**

An oblique stroke to record attendance, using a reverse direction for the afternoon session.

#### **O Unauthorised absence**

O with L inside if arrives late.

**Authorised absence will be shown in the register by 'O' with a supplementary symbol inside the letter to record the reason for absence:**

H Holiday (for which absence has been granted)

C Bereavements, Special One-off occasions (e.g. music/ballet examinations, visiting secondary school)

R Day of religious observance in the religious body to which the parents belong

M Medical or Dental appointments (if telephone call is received/if child returns with a note)

I Illness (if telephone call is received/if child returns with a note)

P Approved sporting activity (e.g. swimming gala, matches, and tournaments)

E Excluded for a fixed or indefinite period

V Educational visit (e.g. London/Stackpole/day trips)

Holiday forms must be completed before a child goes on holiday. Forms are available from the School Office.

If a parent requests permission for a child's absence from school (other than for a family holiday) whether by letter or in person, then this request must be referred to the Headteacher.

If no telephone message has been received to explain a child's absence then a note is required when

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the child returns to school from absence. If a note is not received, then a letter must be sent to the parent/guardian (see Appendix A in the Attendance Policy).

**IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE (OR PRACTICE) YOUR REGISTER WILL BE BROUGHT OUT  
TO YOU IN THE PLAYGROUND (SEE NOTES ON FIRE PRACTICE)**