

Bealings Attendance Policy 2022/2023

1. Introduction

1.1 Bealings acknowledges there are clear links between:

Attendance and attainment

Attendance and safeguarding

1.2 Bealings is committed to providing high-quality education to all its pupils. By attending school every day and on time children and young people can take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

1.3 The whole school community – pupils, parents and carers, teaching and support staff and school governors – have the responsibility to ensure school attendance and all have important roles to play. The purpose of this policy is to clarify everyone’s part in this.

1.4 The policy applies to all children registered at Bealings and is based on current government and Local Authority guidance and statutory regulations. Bealings will ensure that all members of the community know of the policy and have access to it.

1.5 Bealings encourages all parents/carers to work in partnership with the school in order to improve attendance and punctuality and recognises that “parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that pupils of compulsory school age attend school regularly”.

1.6 Bealings uses the Local Authority recommended attendance codes.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 The attendance policy ensures that all staff and governors in our school are fully aware of and clear about the actions necessary to promote good attendance.

2.2 Throughout the policy Bealings aims to:

- Improve pupil’s achievement by promoting high levels of attendance and punctuality
- Achieve 100% for all pupils, apart from those with acute or chronic health issues

- Create an ethos in which good attendance and punctuality are recognised as the norm and seen to be valued by the school
- Raise awareness of parents, carers and pupils of the importance of uninterrupted attendance and punctuality at every stage of a child's education
- Ensure that our policy applies to non-statutory school age children in order to promote good habits at an early age
- Work in partnership with pupils, parents/carers, staff and the Education Welfare Officer so that all pupils realise their potential, unhindered by unnecessary absence
- Promote a positive and welcoming atmosphere in which pupils feel safe, secure and valued, and encourage in pupils a sense of their own responsibility
- Establish a pattern of monitoring attendance and ensure consistency in recognising achievement and dealing with difficulties
- Recognise the key role of all staff in promoting good attendance
- To make explicit Bealings registrations procedures

3. Registration procedures

3.1 Registration is an important part of the school day. Bealings acknowledges that attendance registers are legal documents, may be presented as evidence in a Court of Law; therefore, all staff undertake to mark registers accurately at all times.

3.2 Morning registrations is viewed as a time to welcome pupils into school and help prepare them for the day ahead, as well as an opportunity to explain any changes to the day's usual activities.

3.3 Registers at Bealings are taken at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions (9.00am and 1.00pm).

3.4 Bealings attendance registers are available for inspection by authorised personnel during normal school hours.

4. School's Responsibilities

4.1 All Bealings staff place a high value on regular attendance and good punctuality. They also have a responsibility to set an example in matters relating to their own attendance and punctuality.

4.2 Bealings staff are responsible for ensuring pupils have good attendance by:

- Ensuring that attendance registers are kept accurately; differentiating appropriately between authorised and unauthorised absence (a letter or message from a parent or carer does not in itself authorise an absence – only the school can decide whether the parent/carers explanation justifies authorising the absence).
- Responding to absenteeism firmly, consistently and with care
- Contacting parents/carers when they are concerned about a pupil's absences, and recording the contact
- Consulting with the Education Welfare Officer if a pupil's attendance continues to give concern
- Promoting regular school attendance (for example, by contacting parents/carers on the first day of absence if parents/carers have not contacted the school).
- Acknowledging good or improved attendance of individuals and classes.

5. Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

5.1 Children who are persistently late or absent soon fall behind with their learning. Children who are absent from school frequently develop large gaps in their learning which will impact on their progress and their ability to meet age related learning expectations.

Punctuality

5.2 It is the parents/carers responsibility to ensure that their children arrive to school on time.

The morning register will be called promptly at 9.00am. Any child arriving after this time will be marked as late (L). Any child arriving after the registers have closed at 9.15am will be marked as unauthorised late (U).

The afternoon register will be called promptly at 1.00pm. Any child arriving after this time will be marked as late (L). Any child arriving after the registers have closed at 1.10pm will be marked as unauthorised late (U).

Children who arrive after the registers have been called are to report to the School office to be signed in.

Absences

5.3. It is the parents/carers responsibility to:

- Notify the school of the first day of absence before 9.15am or as soon as possible. Parents/carers can report an absence by phoning or emailing the School office.
- To provide medical evidence, if requested, on a child's return to school.
- To ensure that as far as possible, medical appointments are arranged outside school hours.
- To liaise with the school as soon as possible regarding any specific issues that might cause absence or lateness, e.g., sick parent/carers. Parents/carers of children whom we do not know the reason for absence will be contacted after 9.30am.

Illness and medical absences

5.4. In addition to the points above, if a child is repeatedly absent due to illness, the school may request medical evidence for further absences. This can take the form of a GP appointment card, a consultant letter, a copy of a prescription etc.

In the case of a chronic illness or other long-term issue then a letter or note from the GP or other health professional to state the child is not fit for school or stating the times and days each week the child will not be fit for school will be required. This will give clarity to both the school and the child, plus the parent/carer.

6. Term-time holiday absences

6.1 Parents/carers are expected to take their child(ren) on holiday during the 14 weeks school holidays to minimise the impact on their child(ren) missing their education.

6.2 Parents/carers requesting a term-time holiday must complete an absence request form in advance of their trip (ideally at least 4 weeks prior). These requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Headteachers.

6.3 It is the parents/carers responsibility to:

- obtain an absence request form from the School office
- complete and submit the form in advance of the period of absence.

7. Absence for other reasons

7.1 It is the parents/carers responsibility to:

- Inform the School office, in writing, of the need for leave in circumstances which are known in advance
- Inform the school as soon as possible when sudden circumstances occur which prevent a family bringing a child to school, so that an appropriate code can be recorded in the register.

Unexplained absences

7.2 When a child is repeatedly absent and no satisfactory reason is given, the parent/carers will be investigated and may be liable for prosecution and/or a fine from the Local Authority.

7.3 Regular monitoring of all pupil's attendance is carried out by the Education Welfare Officer. Children who have repeated unauthorised absences, holidays or otherwise, will be contacted by the Education Welfare Officer and may be invited to an attendance meeting to discuss absences and any appropriate support.

8. Role of the Education Welfare Officer

8.1 To investigate absence which exceeds more than 10%, and to hold meetings with those parents as required.

8.2 To ensure parents/carers are aware of their legal duty under the Education Act to ensure their children attend school.

8.3 To refer cases to the Local Authority for prosecution where persistent absenteeism has not improved despite thorough intervention and support from the school and Education Welfare Service.

9. Persistent latecomers

9.1 Parents/carers should not that children who arrive late after the register has closed are given a 'U' code, which is the equivalent of an unauthorised absence and this will affect the child's attendance figures. Fixed penalty notices may be

issued to parents/carers whose children persistently arrive after the times of 9.15am and 1.10pm.

9.2 Children who repeatedly attend school late after 9.15am or 1.10pm will be brought to the attention of the Education Welfare Officer, who may invite parents to attend a meeting in school to discuss the persistent lateness before the issue of a fixed penalty notice.