

Beacon Federation Policy Document

**Attendance**

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| Written / Reviewed | September 2019 |
| Next Review Date | September 2022 |

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**Rationale**

The Beacon Federation is committed to providing a high quality educational experience for all pupils. We believe that if pupils are to benefit fully from this, good attendance is crucial. As a Federation we will do all that we can to ensure maximum attendance. Any problems that prevent full attendance will be identified and addressed as speedily as possible.

We will give a high priority to conveying to parents and pupils the importance of regular and punctual attendance. Parents have a vital role to play and we aim to establish strong communication systems that can be used whenever there is concern about attendance; we will investigate, identify and strive to work in partnership with parents and pupils to resolve any problems as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The Education Act 1996 requires parents/carers to ensure their children receive efficient, full-time education, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Schools are responsible for recording pupil attendance twice a day - once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. An entry must be made in the attendance register for all pupils of compulsory school age who are on the school’s admission roll.

**Aims**

* To encourage full attendance and punctuality.
* To record and monitor attendance and absenteeism and apply appropriate strategies

to minimise its occurrence.

* To acknowledge and reward a successful record of attendance.
* To ensure a consistent approach throughout the school.

**Punctuality**

It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure their children arrive at school on time. Punctuality is monitored by the school and parents will be contacted if their children are persistently late. These cases may be referred to the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

Separate registration codes are required for lateness prior to close of registration and afterwards. Registers will remain ‘open’ for the first 30 minutes of the morning registration period. In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties the school may keep the register open for a longer period. Late arrival during this period will be coded as ‘Authorised Late’ (L).

Late arrival after the register is closed is an ‘Unauthorised Absence’ (coded U). Where a pupil arrives after close of registration with a legitimate reason, the absence should be authorised using the appropriate code (for example due to an appointment with a doctor).

**Reporting Absence**

In the event of a pupil’s absence, it is the responsibility of parents/carers to inform the school of the reason on the first day, preferably by phone or otherwise via a note.

If parents have not contacted school on the first day of absence, the school will make telephone contact with them by 11am.

In the case of long term illness, the school should be notified. If it is known that a pupil will be absent for more than 2 weeks, the EWO will be notified.

**Requesting Absence during Term Time**

All requests for planned absence must be made using the S2 form, available from each school office, a minimum of 3 weeks beforehand. The Headteacher will consider each application but is unable to authorise absence except for:

* Sickness or unavoidable cause (solely affecting the child).
* Days set aside for family religious observance.
* Where LA transport to which the child is entitled has not been provided.
* Exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher.

*There is no entitlement to avoidable absence such as holidays during term time.*

In cases of unauthorised term-time absence, the Headteacher can apply directly to the Education Welfare Service to generate a penalty notice warning letter without necessarily contacting the school’s Educational Welfare Officer (EWO). This would be done by completing a Penalty Notice Certificate of Absence Form and returning it to the penalty notice office of the EWS.

**Monitoring Absence**

Teachers will maintain accurate attendance registers and alert the Headteacher if they have any concerns about attendance or punctuality.

The Administrators at each school will provide the Headteacher with an Attendance Report at the end of each half-term, including an individual breakdown for any child whose attendance for the year to date falls below 90-95% (depending on the timing within the academic year)

The schools will make contact with parents / carers where there are any concerns about attendance or punctuality. There are a series of four letters which will be sent in this order:

* A1 – advises that the school has noted a pupil’s absence
* A2 – advises that further absence has been noted and expresses concern. This letter warns that it may become necessary to request medical evidence when the child is reported sick, and also offers the chance to meet with a member of staff for discussion.
* A3 – advises that the school will now require medical proof of any further absence, and again offers the opportunity to meet with school staff to seek advice and support.
* A4 – advises that there has been no significant improvement and that the matter is being referred to the Education Welfare Officer.

The Education Welfare Officer will be notified in the following circumstances:

* When a parent has been sent letter A4
* When there has been unauthorised absence by a pupil of more than 10 half day sessions (in aggregate) in any one term.
* When attendance is less than 85%

An attendance meeting may be called, including parents/carers, EWO and, if appropriate, the school nurse. The meeting will be used to discuss problems, offer support and to set targets for improvement.

**Leaving the School**

Parents are to inform the school in writing if a child is removed from a roll. Details of the new school should be provided, if applicable. If a child leaves a school to be home educated, then form EWS 10 must be completed and returned to the EWS service.

When a child moves from school and no notification is received from another school, the ‘old’ school should complete a (CME) ‘Child Missing Education’ form and return it to the EWS.

**Promoting Good Attendance**

Each school will have its own methods of promoting good attendance, which may include:

* Awarding certificates at the end of a term or academic year.
* Reminders and updates in the weekly school newsletters.
* Parents’ meetings, and other occasions may be used to stress to all parents the importance and benefits of regular attendance and punctuality.

**Governors**

It is the legal responsibility of Governors to monitor and evaluate attendance in their schools. A report on attendance will be given in each termly Headteacher’s Report and governors will respond to this appropriately.