

St Barnabas CE Primary School

Promoting Good Attendance at School Policy & Procedure

At St Barnabas CE Primary School we want all children to have the best possible attendance at school to enable each and every child to reach their full potential.

There is a strong link between good school attendance and achieving good results. Children who frequently miss school may fall behind with their work which may affect their future prospects.

At St Barnabas we work closely with families to support children to achieve the best possible outcomes.

St Barnabas follows the [City of York Guidance Relating to Pupil Leave of Absence from School](#) and the [City of York Code of Conduct for the use of Education Related Penalty Notices](#).

Attendance every day

By law, all children must attend the school they are registered at regularly. We expect all children to attend school each day from 8:45am to 3pm unless they are too unwell to attend, have a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled after school or in the holidays or have other exceptional reasons for absence.

We view attendance above 99% as excellent; above 97% as good; and above 95% as satisfactory, meeting our minimum expectations. Attendance below 95% is concerning; below 92% considered poor; and should attendance fall to 90% or below a student is considered a 'persistent absentee' (PA). The school is required to report all students who don't attend regularly to the Local Authority.

On time for school

We expect children to be on time for school. The bell signals the start of the day at 8:45am at which point children should be ready to line up with their class on the playground before being led into school. Cloakroom doors are closed at 8:50am. Arrival at school after this time should be via the main entrance where children need to be signed in. A late mark (L) will be recorded in the register for your child if they arrive between 8:50-9am.

Registers close at 9am. Children arriving at school after this time will be marked as U (Late after registers close) in the register. This means that the session is recorded as a half day absence.

Being just 10 minutes late for school each day can lead to your child missing 6 days of school over the year.

Communication with school about absence

We recognise that illness happens, children get sick and there will be occasions when your child is too ill to come into school. If your child is unable to attend school on a particular day, please let us know (by phone / email) by 9am. For safeguarding reasons we are required to have confirmation of your child's absence. Therefore, if we have not had communication from you by 9:15am we will contact you. If we cannot contact you, we will get in touch with the other named contacts for your child. We may then have to contact social services or the police if we have not had the absence confirmed.

Holidays/ leave of absence in term time

Parents do not have an automatic right for their children to have authorised absence to go on holiday. We do not authorise leave of absence in term time except in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances may include:

- service personnel who are prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
- when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis
- any other circumstances the head teacher considers to be exceptional.

Leave of absence must be requested via a form available from the school office. Please allow a minimum of 2 weeks for this request to be processed. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

Unauthorised absence

If a leave of absence is taken without approval or children are absent from school without a valid reason, this will be recorded as an unauthorised absence in the register (G,O,U).

Attendance concerns

We regularly monitor children's attendance. At least three times per year you will be informed about your child's attendance – overall attendance, number of lates / unauthorised attendance.

We will also let you know if we have any concerns about your child's attendance e.g. a high number of unauthorised absences or lates. Should there not be a good reason for continued low attendance at school we are required to work with the Local Authority, initially holding an Attendance Panel Meeting, to explore reasons for this and to consider any support that you may need to improve your child's attendance. Ultimately the Local Authority could proceed towards legal action (penalty notice), should the situation not improve.

Circumstances where a penalty notice may be issued

The school can ask the City of York Council to consider issuing a penalty notice for unauthorised absence in the following circumstances:

- Persistent unauthorised absence.
- Unauthorised term time leave
- Unauthorised delayed return from extended holidays (the pupil fails to return on agreed date).
- Persistent late arrival at school (after the register has closed).
- Persistently late arrival (before the register has closed)

Finally

There are a few ways in which you can help support your child's attendance:

- **When ill, contact school by 9am to report the absence.**
- **If you discover your child is worried about anything at school, contact your child's teacher**
- **Only take family holidays during the school holidays**
- **Make appointments outside the school day or in the school holidays**