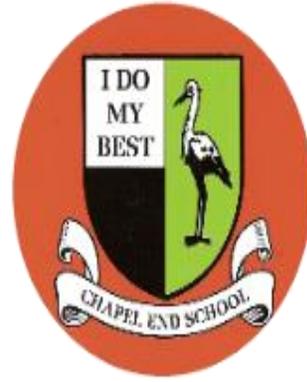


Billinge Chapel End Primary School and Nursery

Attendance Policy
(2020-2023)



Policy Statement

With the intention of enabling all pupils to take advantage of the educational opportunities available to them, Billinge Chapel End Primary School aims to encourage excellent levels of attendance and punctuality.

Statutory Requirements

Under section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where they are a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or a telephone message from a parent does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised.

AIMS

1. To improve the overall percentage of learners at school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school, including learners, parents, teachers and governors.
3. To develop a framework, which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.
4. To provide support, advice and guidance to parents and learners.
5. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
6. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
7. To implement a system of rewards and sanctions.
8. To promote effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies.
9. To recognise the needs of the individual learner when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Improving attendance at Billinge Chapel End Primary School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community - pupils, parents, staff and Governors.

Parents

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their child attends school regularly, punctually, properly equipped and in a fit state to learn.

If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible - by phone call on the first day of absence followed by a written communication. A pupil's absence from school is considered to be unauthorized until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent. Parents will be informed promptly of any concerns which may arise over a child's attendance. Parents should avoid, if at all possible, making medical/dental appointments for their child during school hours.

Parents whose first language is not English or who have literacy problems will be offered appropriate support from school in matters of communication.

School

Billinge Chapel End Primary School expects pupils to attend regularly, to arrive on time, be properly equipped and in a fit condition to learn.

The school will work closely with parents should attendance or punctuality give cause for concern.

The school will keep individual records of attendance and punctuality.

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff. The school will employ a range of strategies to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will investigate promptly all absences, liaising closely with parents.

STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ATTENDANCE

- Billinge Chapel End Primary School will offer an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed and feel that their presence in school is important and that they will be missed when they are absent/late.
- Attendance and punctuality data will be regularly collected and used to help identify patterns, set targets and inform policy/ practice.
- Parents will be reminded regularly (via newsletters, the school brochure, parents' evenings, etc) of the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils who are absent through sickness for any **extended** period of time will (when appropriate) have work sent home to them and will be re-integrated back into school upon their return.
- The Headteacher will make an annual report to the school's governing body on attendance matters.
- The Headteacher will, when appropriate, liaise with other agencies - Educational Psychology Service, Social Services, Education Welfare Officer and other agencies - when this may serve to support and assist pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- The Headteacher will liaise, where necessary, with the school's Education Welfare Officer in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.

AUTHORISED/UNAUTHORISED ABSENCE

Parents should provide an explanation of all absences. The school will then decide whether or not it will authorise the absence.

Absence from school will be authorised if it is for the following reasons:

- sickness
- unavoidable medical/dental appointments (evidence should be provided to indicate time and date of appointment)
- days of religious observance
- exceptional family circumstances, such as bereavement
- absence with permission e.g. music examinations

Absence from school will not be authorised for:

- shopping
- looking after brothers, sisters or unwell parents
- birthdays
- Y2 or Y6 pupils taking holidays during national test weeks

Absence from school will also be unauthorised if :

- no explanation is forthcoming;

- the school is dissatisfied with the explanation;
- the pupil is away from school on a family holiday for a period of time longer than that negotiated with the school.
- the pupil is on a family holiday without permission or if the parents have failed to apply for permission in advance of the holiday and instead seek retrospective approval on their return.

HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday during term time. Leave during term time can only be given in exceptional circumstances. If parents/carers apply to the school in advance, the school may grant up to two weeks term-time absence in any year if mitigating circumstances exist and evidence of the circumstances can be provided to school.

Occasionally, holidays of more than two weeks to visit family living overseas may be planned. Parents are urged to discuss with school staff, the most appropriate time of year and point in the child's education career for this visit to take place. This will help minimise disruption to the child's progress at school.

Parents must complete a Leave of Absence form at least two weeks prior to absence which should be returned to the classteacher along with any documentary evidence to support the request. A reply slip will be returned to the parent with the school's decision.

PROCEDURES FOR FOLLOWING UP ABSENCE

REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Attendance Co-ordinator: Fiona Pennington

The register is a legal document and must be completed punctually and accurately as part of an orderly start to the school session.

Registers will be taken promptly at 9.00 am and at 1.00 pm (KS2) and 1.15 pm (KS1).

Nursery registers are marked at 9.05 am and 12.40 pm.

Staff will use the LA attendance codes and on the weekly absence sheet.

Each pupil should be called by name and should respond clearly.

Children arriving after the register has been completed will be marked late. Late arrivals must report to the school office. Pupils arriving after 9.30 am will receive an unauthorised absence.

Important -First Day response

If a child is absent from register and no message has been received by the school office as to why, attempts should be made by the office staff to contact the parents before 9.30am to ascertain why the child is not in school. A note should be made of the call if contact is not made.

LATENESS

- The school doors are opened at 8.50 a.m. to enable registration to begin promptly at 9.00 a.m.
- Children arriving in school after 9.00 a.m are marked in the register as "late" and this will be closely monitored. All pupils arriving after 9.00 am will be required to enter the building through the front door (side gates will be locked).
- Children arriving into school after the register is closed, will be entered into the 'late book' in the Entrance Hall. If they arrive after 9.30am they will lose their attendance mark for the whole morning and will be classified as an unauthorised absence.
- Parents will be informed by a telephone call if their child is persistently late and asked to ensure that there is an improvement.
- If there is no improvement a letter will be sent explaining that punctuality is being monitored.
- If there is still no improvement a second letter will be sent requesting a meeting with the parents to discuss any issues and, if necessary, any support that is required.

ILLNESS

- If your child is not able to attend school, you are required to inform the school office by 9.15 a.m. by telephone. The office is staffed from 8.30 am and messages may be left on the answer phone prior to this time.
- Parents of any child, who is absent without notification, will be contacted after 9.30 a.m.
- If the school is not informed of the reason for a child's absence, the absence will then be recorded as 'unauthorised'.
- Unauthorised absences will be followed up by the attendance officer.

Monitoring of Attendance

- Attendance is monitored daily. The parents of any child who falls below 92% attendance will be subject to the following procedure:

Stage 1 Parent contacted by letter to inform them that attendance is being monitored and there needs to be an improvement.

Stage 2 If no improvement, a letter will be sent to invite parents to a meeting in school with the EWO to explain the importance of attendance.

Stage 3 If no improvement, advice will be sought from EWO regarding further action and potential issue of Fixed Penalty fines. The *Guidance for the issuing of penalty notices* was adopted by the Governing Body in Spring 2013 and can be found as a separate document attached to this policy.

Appendix

St Helens Council-Penalty Notices-Code of Conduct

BILLINGE CHAPEL END PRIMARY SCHOOL & NURSERY

Request for Leave of Absence during term time

To be completed and returned to school at least two weeks prior to the proposed absence

Leave during term time will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Parents/carers must apply to the school in advance of the absence, in the case of family holidays during term time the school may authorise the holiday if mitigating circumstances exist. Evidence of the circumstances must be provided to school.

I request permission for my child: Class:

to be absent from school from:day, 20..... (*first day of absence*)

to:day, 20..... (*last day of absence*)

and will return to school on: Number of school days absent:

Reason for leave and details of documents attached to support the request:

Signed:(Parent/Guardian) Date:

You will receive a letter from the Headteacher when your application has been considered

Billinge Chapel End Primary School & Nursery - Pupil Leave of Absence

Pupil's name: Class: Current % Attendance:

Permission granted and reason:

- NOSSA
- Wedding (evidence provided)
- Bereavement
- Work dictated holiday (evidence provided)
- Policy/Emergency Services restrictions (evidence provided)
- Educational/sporting event (evidence provided)
- Other

Number of days authorised:

Permission refused and reason:

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No of days unauthorised:

Signed:
Headteacher

Date:

Presented to Governing Body (*if applicable*)

Date:

Signed:Chair of Governors