

Bankside Attendance Policy

Why attendance at school is important

Children need regular attendance at school to help them to learn the best they can. Attending every day also helps children to make friends, feel safe in routines and enjoy their learning.

If children miss days of school regularly this is called Persistent Absence.

It is the legal responsibility of parents and carers to:

- Bring your child to school every day.
- Communicate with school about illness or appointments that might make them absent.

At Bankside we will work with families to achieve the best possible attendance for children to support their learning. If there are problems which make it hard to bring your child to school it is important to discuss this with school staff so that we can help.

Attendance at school is also important to keep children safe. If children are absent and no reason is provided to school, this will be referred to the safeguarding team and further action may be taken.

Our Approach

Children will always be welcomed to school by leaders, office staff and classroom staff. We work hard to ensure that all children have a successful learning experience in their class and will seek to resolve any issues that are brought to our attention quickly and effectively.

We monitor children's attendance regularly so that we can identify any patterns of absence and meet with parents to address these.

We have an attendance target of 96%. Children with attendance of 96% or higher are likely to make better progress than those with poor attendance.

Very rarely, we may ask children to remain at home if they have a contagious illness. Staff will communicate with parents to ensure that they return to school as quickly as possible.

We celebrate children with excellent attendance through attendance awards. Each year we also celebrate children with improved attendance and those who have maintained their attendance despite challenges (such as additional medical appointments or long-term illness).

	Home	School
Child is poorly and unable to come to school	Parents should contact the office before 8am to give the reason for absence.	School will call on the third day of absence to check in.
	If children are absent for more than 3 days or attendance is below 96%, parents should see a pharmacist / GP / call 111 and provide evidence to school.	School will authorise illness absence when medical evidence is provided.
Child is poorly but is well enough to be in school (cough / cold / injury)	Parents should inform class staff when they drop child off. Staff will monitor child through the day.	School may complete a Health Care Plan if there are some activities the child cannot join in. School will contact parents if child feels worse.
Child has a medical or dental appointment.	Parents should inform the office on the morning of the appointment. They should bring their child into school immediately after the appointment. Routine appointments should be arranged for school holidays or after school.	Half a day's absence will be authorised for appointments, if evidence is provided.
Child is absent - no reason provided	Parents should make every effort to bring their child to school if they are well enough. Parents should communicate with school if there is another issue affecting attendance.	School will make contact with you by telephone, text or home visit, if we have not heard from you, this is because we have a duty to ensure your child's safety. If your child misses 10 sessions (5 days) in a term, they will be placed on the Fast Track initiative. If absence falls below 90%, we may refer the matter to Leeds City Council (see appendix 2). If we believe that your child is absent due to a holiday you may be issued with a penalty notice, £60 per parent per child.
Child is absent - religious festival	Parents should inform school if their child will be absent due to religious observance.	Up to 2 days per academic year will be authorised for religious observance

Authorised absence is defined as:

- o Genuine illness
- o Medical or dental appointment (routine appointments should be arranged out of school time)
- o Bereavement – at Head teachers’ discretion
- o Religious observance – no more than two days per academic year
- o Approved leave in term time where there are exceptional circumstances, as agreed by the Head teacher.

Unauthorised absence is defined by:

- o Holidays in term time where permission has NOT been given by the school
- o Late, after registers have closed (a U code will be used)
- o Unexplained absence. Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for 10 days will be referred to the local authority as a child missing education.
- o Taking the rest of the day off, before or after a medical appointment
- o Staying at home to care for sick relatives
- o Birthdays, weddings or anniversaries
- o Transport issues i.e. car broken down
- o Going shopping or having a hair cut

Exceptional circumstances

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school during term time. Absence in term time will only be considered if parents / carers make a request to the school on the appropriate form giving exceptional reasons why the application for absence has been requested and provide information to support their application. Please note that the definition of ‘exceptional’ means ‘very unusual’. Therefore, a second request for absence based on ‘exceptional circumstances’ is unlikely to be authorised.

The Head teacher will decide whether or not the absence will be authorised. Parents / carers who take their children out of school during term time without authorisation, may be issued with a penalty fine. In order to request exceptional leave parents should complete the form in appendix 1.

Children Missing Education

If there is no contact between school and the family and the child’s whereabouts are unknown it is possible for a child to be removed from a school roll. This will only happen in circumstances where children do not return to school for ten days after an authorised absence or are absent from school without authorisation for twenty consecutive school days.

Continuing concerns around school attendance

School could start to ask for medical evidence before authorising any further absences if your child’s attendance falls below 96%

If attendance continues to be a concern, then this will lead to a referral being made to the 2gether Cluster attendance and admissions Lead. Ultimately parents/carers can be held to account for failing to ensure that their children attend school punctually and regularly. Leeds City Council, school attendance service carries out this statutory function on behalf of the local authority to uphold the right of children and young people to access their education.

The safety, welfare and wellbeing of all our pupils is paramount. Therefore, if your child is absent and there is no contact between school and home, or there are safeguarding or child protection concerns for a child, this will be referred to a member of our safeguarding team and further action will be taken as necessary.

Where necessary statutory action can and will be taken under section 444 Education Act 1996 or Education Supervision Order under the Children's Act 1989 this may take the form of a penalty notice, prosecution of parents in the Magistrate Court resulting in a fine, or a statutory order.

School will share pupils' attendance at regular intervals at parents' evenings and in written reports.

% Attendance expressed in number of days absent:

Attendance / absence is presented as a percentage figure, but it's helpful to equate this to a number of days off:

Attendance percentage	absence per week	absence per term	Absence per academic year
98%			fewer than 4 days absent in a school year
95%			fewer than 10 days absent in a school year
90%	½ a day	1 week 2 days	4 weeks
80%	1 day	2 weeks 4 days	8 weeks
70%	1 ½ days	4 weeks 1 day	12 weeks
60%	2 days	5 weeks 3 days	16 weeks
50%	2 ½ days	7 weeks	20 weeks

Lateness

Being late to school has a significant impact on the amount of learning time lost over a school year. The table give you an indication of how much time is lost if regularly late.

Minutes late per day	Number of days over year
5 Minutes	3.4 days
10 Minutes	6.9 days
15 Minutes	10.3 days
20 Minutes	13.8 days