

The Bliss Charity School

School Attendance

We seek to work in partnership with parents to ensure that each child's experience is one that will enable them to make good progress by building on their skills and talents within a continuous and consistent learning environment. If together we are to achieve this aim, regular attendance at school is vital and full parental support and co-operation in this matter is necessary.

Why is it important for children not to miss school?

Children only get one chance at school. If they do not attend school regularly they may not be able to keep up with their school work or could miss whole sections of the curriculum. Setting good attendance patterns from an early age will also help children later on in life.

Pupils whose attendance is good:

- Understand lessons better
- Achieve better results
- Sustain friendships
- Have a good self-esteem/positive/confident
- Get better jobs in the future

Pupils whose attendance is unsatisfactory:

- Don't understand lessons so well
- Get behind with their work
- Find it difficult to maintain friendship groups
- Have low self-esteem/confidence
- Achieve less

What does good attendance mean?

- 100% attendance - when a pupil arrives on time and attends every lesson every day
- At The Bliss Charity School we expect all pupils to achieve 95% or above

What does unsatisfactory attendance mean?

- Attending 90% of the time or less. This will have a serious effect on learning
- One half day's absence every week will give 90% attendance
- Continual lateness
- Research suggests that 17 days missed from school often equates to one level lower in KS2 SAT's

What happens if my child is late?

Children are expected to be in **school for registration at 8.55 am**. Any child arriving after this time, should enter the school via the office and if accompanied, should give a reason for the lateness. This will be recorded in the register as present but late. Any child arriving after 9.25am, will be recorded as absent for that session, unless the office has been notified otherwise. Pupils who are consistently late are disrupting not only their own education but also that of others. The headteacher monitors the pupil's attendance every half term.

Letters will be sent out to parents whose children are persistently late and a meeting may be arranged if the situation does not improve. Ultimately families could be referred to the Education Welfare Service.

School Attendance Regulations from 1st September 2013

The following amendments from the Department for Education that relate to school attendance will come into effect from 1st September 2013.

“The amendments make clear that Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances”

“Parents can be fined a fixed penalty notice for taking their child/children out of school during term time without consent from the school”

From the 1st September 2013, the fine will be £60 per adult for each child if paid within 21 days, rising to £120 within 28 days.

The regulations do allow headteachers to sanction absence in “exceptional circumstances”. Please find below a list of allowable absences and those which will now be classed as unauthorised absences.

Allowed absence

- Sickness
- Emergency medical appointments
- Day/s for specific religious observance
- School is closed due to unforeseen circumstances

Allowed absence in exceptional circumstances (at the discretion of the headteacher)

- Specialist medical appointments
- Family bereavement or close friend bereavement
- Other compassionate grounds
- Family wedding taking part on school day – not travelling to a wedding unless it is abroad.
- Family crisis
- Examinations off site
- Attendance at an event at the request of a public organisation
- Visit to new school – only if family is relocating
- “House hunting” – only if family is relocating
- Holiday where the school is in receipt of a letter from the employer stating that the employee is not permitted to take holidays in school holiday time.

Absences not allowed under any circumstances

- Routine dental & optical check-ups
- Family holiday no matter what length
- Family trips
- Leaving early to travel to an event
- Visit to new school but family not relocating

All requests for absence due to exceptional circumstances must be placed in writing prior to the event. The headteacher will then review each request and decide if it meets the criteria. Parents will then be informed of the outcome by letter.

If your child has persistent absences due to illness or has an unexplained absence we will require confirmation via a doctors note.

In an effort to reduce the burden on teaching staff and to maintain the progress of teaching to ‘absent students’, it is a requirement that ‘the absent student must endeavour to catch up immediately on return to normal attendance.

Yours sincerely

Chris Scanlan
Headteacher