2026 - 2027

Booker Avenue Infant School Attendance and Punctuality Policy

Chair of Governors:	Danek Jarosz
Headteacher:	Lynne Brown
Designated Attendance Lead:	Lynne Brown
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1.0 Introduction

Booker Avenue Infant School recognises the link between the attendance and attainment of pupils. The aim of this policy is to encourage the highest possible levels of attendance and punctuality for pupils within Booker Avenue Infant School to support learning and achievement.

The importance of attendance and punctuality is underpinned by an awareness of safeguarding. It is important to see our children every day and provide an educationally safe and secure environment.

To gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that all pupils attend regularly and on time. Pupils should attend every day that the school is open. As a school we set a target for all pupils to aim for 100% attendance, with the expectation all pupils achieve at least 97%.

As a school we define regular attendance as 97% or above.

As a school we recognise that attendance is a matter for the whole school community. Our Attendance Policy should not be viewed in isolation; it is a strand that runs through all aspects of school improvement, supported by polices on admissions, safeguarding and behaviour and inclusion.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to meeting the requirements laid out in the Department for Education statutory guidance "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" (Statutory Guidance from August 19, 2024)

2.0 Aims

- Provide a framework to support building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school.
- Raise the profile of attendance and punctuality amongst the school community
- Set high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Reduce the number of pupils who are persistently absent (90% or below) or severely absent (50% or below)
- Ensure every pupil has access to a full-time education
- Have clear procedures for the maintenance of accurate registration for all pupils.
- Ensure a systematic approach to gathering, analysing and acting upon attendance data is in place
- Ensure there is a proactive whole school approach that embeds consistency of practice.
- Continue to promote effective partnerships with the Local Authority, Children's Services, School Health and other partner agencies.

3.0 Legal Framework

This policy is based on the Department for Education statutory guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance"
The guidance is based on the following legislation

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- School Attendance Pupil (Pupil registration) Regulations 2023

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Governance:

The governing board is responsible for:

- Making sure leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Ensuring that the school has high aspirations
- Regularly analysing attendance data and reviewing the school's performance
- Ensuring all staff receive adequate training on their role in supporting pupil attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of the attendance policy

4.2 *The* Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- Reporting school level performance data to governors
- Ensuring effective communication between school and the local authority
- Ensuring effective communication with ***parents** for all pupils where there are barriers to attendance

***** *Section 576 of the Education Act 1996, the definition of a parent under education law defines "parent" as:*
(a) All natural (biological) parents, whether they are married or not;
(b) Any person who, although not a natural parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person;
(c) Any person who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person.

4.3The role of the Designated Attendance Lead - **Lynne Brown**

The designated attendance lead is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school
- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement
- Ensuing all staff are aware of their role in supporting pupil attendance
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the school's process and procedures for managing attendance
- Implementing specific strategies to address poor attendance identified through the analysis of data
- Coordinating targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

5.0 Promoting regular Attendance at Booker Avenue Infant School:

This is everybody's responsibility, all members of staff, parents and pupils.

To help us all focus on this, Booker Avenue Infant School will ensure:

- There is a designated attendance lead (DAL) for championing and improving attendance.
- Effective strategies are in place to support all pupils to arrive on time for school.
- An engaging curriculum is provided
- High quality teaching and learning is delivered throughout the school
- Pupils are provided with appropriate support from school and partner agencies to ensure regular attendance at school
- Pupils who experience difficulties in attending school are provided with effective support at the earliest opportunity and attendance is monitored rigorously
- Effective partnerships with parents are encouraged through regular contact and communication
- Parents are kept informed of pupil attendance and punctuality through the school's attendance procedures, termly progress reports, individual letters and meetings when required
- Good attendance and punctuality is rewarded through regular individual pupil incentives
- Attendance and punctuality is regularly discussed with children in assemblies
- Attendance roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and all staff should ensure that these are followed

6.0 Safeguarding

A child not attending school, persistent lateness, or children missing from education may be considered a safeguarding issue if this places the child at risk of harm. Therefore, information about the cause of any absence from school is required.

To safeguard all the children in our care, it is important that parents provide the school with their current contact details and provide additional contact numbers in case of an emergency.

More information on safeguarding and the protection of children can be found in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

7.1 Expectations of Parents

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is a parent's legal responsibility (Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act) and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

- Ensure your child arrives for school on time.
- Telephone school if your child is going to be late.
- Routine non-emergency medical and dental appointments should be made whenever possible outside of school hours. Confirmation of the appointment should be provided.

- Contact school by 8.45am on the first day of absence if your child is unable to attend, giving an indication of the expected duration and return date to school.
- If a text message/phone call is made by the school due to your child's absence it is important that you respond to ensure your child is appropriately safeguarded.
- Contact the Designated Attendance Lead if the reason for absence requires a more personal discussion.
- In case of emergency, school must have up to date contact numbers. Please ensure you inform us of any changes especially to mobile telephone numbers. (As a school we request a minimum of three emergency contact details be provided)
- Requests for exceptional circumstances leave of absence must be in writing to the headteacher and can only be authorised by the headteacher. Reasons such as a close family bereavement or taking part in a significant religious event would be acceptable for short absences. Unacceptable reasons for missing school, include general holidays, weddings, shopping, concerts and birthdays.

7.2 If a pupil is absent, we will:

- Telephone and text parents on the first day of absence if we have not heard from them by 9.15am
- If no response is received, a member of school staff may conduct a home visit. If there are safeguarding concerns, contact will be made with the family as soon as possible.
- If a pupil's absence continues, the parent will be invited to meet the Attendance Lead and any barriers to the child attending school can be discussed and support put in place. This may include: (Insert school specific strategies) e.g.
    - reintegration support packages
    - Early Help assessment or referral to appropriate support services
    - time limited reduced timetable

- If the parent does not attend the meeting or engage in any support the school has offered and the pupil has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period, the parents may be issued with a Notice to Improve, in accordance with the Liverpool City Council's Penalty Notice Local Code of Conduct and in agreement with the Education Welfare Service.
- If unauthorised absences persist the Attendance Lead will discuss actions with the Education Welfare Service.

8.0 Understanding types of Absence

Booker Avenue Infant School must legally record the reason for all individual pupil absence. Therefore, it is important for parents to directly inform school of the reason for absence, on the first day of absence.

8.1 Authorised Absence

Authorised absence - the school accepts the explanation offered as satisfactory. If no explanation is received, absences cannot be authorised. It is the headteacher, not parents who make the decision to authorise absence from school.

8.2 Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absence - when the school has not received a reason for absence or has not approved a child's leave of absence following a parental request.
This includes but is not exclusive to:

- Parents giving their children permission to be off school unnecessarily, such as for shopping, birthdays, to look after siblings.
- Truancy before or during the school day.
- Absences which have not been explained.
- Pupils who arrive late after the close of registration.

This type of absence may lead to the use of penalty notices or other legal interventions from the Local Authority. Booker Avenue Infant School, in agreement with the Education Welfare Service, may issue a Notice to Improve to parents (in accordance with the National Framework for Penalty Notices and the Local Authority Code of Conduct) where their child has accrued 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week rolling period.

The Notice to Improve period will cover 20 school days. If the child has any unauthorised absence during this time, the school will refer the case to the Local Authority requesting a penalty notice be issued.

8.3 Persistent Absence

Pupils are defined as persistent absentees by the Department for Education (DfE) if their attendance falls below 90%. This is for any absence whether authorised or unauthorised. The DfE expects schools to intervene early to prevent pupils becoming a persistent absentee (PA)

Whilst we understand that pupils can be absent from school because they are ill, sometimes they may be reluctant to attend. If a pupil is reluctant to attend or a parent has concerns, it is important that contact is made with the school at the earliest opportunity to gain support and to work together to gain a resolution.

Parents are asked to contact the Attendance Lead in the first instance.

8.4 Severe Absence

Pupils who miss 50% or more of school are classified as being severely absent by the Department for Education (DfE). This cohort of pupils is a priority group for Booker Avenue Infant School and additional support may be required from the Local Authority and partner agencies to support your child and improve their attendance. It is essential that parents work in partnership with school and its partners, to ensure

their child receives the support they require to overcome any barriers that are preventing them from attending school.

9.0 Why regular attendance is important

Any absence affects education and regular absence will seriously affect pupils' learning.
Pupils who have regular time off often find it difficult to catch up and do well.

90% attendance is equivalent to a pupil missing one half day per week or approximately 118 lessons per year.
Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting your child to have any absence without a good reason from school is an offence in law (The Education Act 1996) and may result in legal action.

10.0 The Education Welfare Service (EWS)

The Education Welfare Service (EWS) – will work with parents to support their child in overcoming any barriers in attending school, The EWS will always try to resolve any issues by working in partnership with the school and family. If a resolution cannot be achieved to improve the pupil's attendance and where unauthorised absence persists and the parent has refused or not engaged with support that has been offered, the local authority will be required to consider the instigation of legal proceedings.

Penalty Notices:

Liverpool City Council (LA) on receipt of a request from Booker Avenue Infant School will issue a Penalty Notice to parents for the unauthorised absence of their child. **The Local Penalty Notice Code of Conduct is published on Liverpool City Council's website**

Before issuing a penalty notice the LA will consider:

- If the national threshold for considering a penalty notice has been met, 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling 10-week period
- If issuing a penalty notice is the best available tool to improve the attendance of the pupil
- If appropriate support has been put in place
- Consideration of the obligations that the school has under the Equality Act 2010 that would make issuing a penalty notice inappropriate
- Each parent who is liable can be issued with a penalty notice, but this will usually be the parent who allowed the absence
- The first penalty notice issued to a parent in respect of a particular pupil will be charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. This will be reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- A second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same pupil in the rolling 3-year period is charged at £160 if paid within 28 days. There is no opportunity to pay a reduced amount.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued to the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of issue of the first. In a case where the national threshold is met for a third time (or

subsequent times) within those 3 years, alternative action will be taken. This will often include considering prosecution, but may include other tools such as one of the other attendance legal interventions

11.0 Leave of absence in Term Time

The Law does not give any entitlement to parents to take their child on holiday during term time.

Parents can receive a penalty notice for taking unauthorised leave in term time without prior consent from school. Consent cannot be given retrospectively.

Any application for leave in term time must be in only exceptional circumstances and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstances warrant the granting of leave. The headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

12.0 Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable**.** If a pupil misses the start of the day, they can miss work and late arriving pupils disrupt lessons. It can be embarrassing for the pupil arriving late and can encourage future absence.

12.1 How we manage lateness

The school day starts and registers are taken at 8.55am by the class teacher/form tutor and pupils receive a late mark if they are not in their class by that time. School recommends that pupils arrive by 8.50 am.

- Late arrival to school following the close of registers is classified as an absence (Code U). If a pupil is persistently late after the official close of the register and there are no barriers preventing the child from arriving on time, the school may request the local authority issue a penalty notice.
- The official close of registration for Booker Avenue Infant School is 9.30 am.

If a parent has any problem getting their child to attend school on time they should contact the who will offer support to resolve the problem.

13.0 People Responsible for Attendance at Booker Avenue Infant School

All school staff, parents and pupils need to work as a team to support the attendance and achievement of pupils. This continued support therefore is vital in making every pupil's journey through school a success. -See attached appendices

14.0 Removal from Roll

From the 1st of September 2016 changes were introduced to the Pupil Registration Regulations 2016. These amendments affect all non-standard transitions; this is whenever a child of compulsory school age leaves a school before completing the school's final year.

As a school we are now required to: Inform the LA in ***every*** circumstance when deleting a pupil's name from the admission register. Inform the LA of the pupil's destination school and home address if the pupil is moving to a new school.
All schools must complete an Exit form and submit to the **CME@liverpool.gov.uk** inbox.

All schools must provide information to the LA when registering new pupils, including the pupil's address and previous school.

If your child is leaving our school parents are asked to:

- Provide the attendance officer with comprehensive information about their plans, including, any date of a move, new address and telephone numbers, your child's new school and the start date when known. This should be submitted to school in writing.

- If a pupil leaves and we do not have the above information, then your child may be considered to be a child missing in education. This requires schools and local authorities to carry out investigations to try to locate your child, which may include liaising with Children's Services, the Police and other agencies. By giving us the above information, these investigations can be avoided.

Appendices ***– working towards best practice -***

Attendance and Punctuality Roles and Responsibilities Guidance

When	Whom	Actions Expected
DAILY	Pupils	• Arrive on school site by 8.50am • Be in class on time for registration at 8.55 am
	Class Teacher	• Registers are completed on the MIS system each day on time • Ensure attendance has a high profile in class • Discuss absence with pupils returning to school
	Pastoral Staff	• Ensuring staff have completed AM/PM registers • Ensuring input of accurate attendance coding in the register via MIS • Identify pupils who are absent from school without reason (before 9.15am) • Log on MIS, parental voicemails, text messages and emails regarding student absences • Ensure all late arriving pupils are spoken to and their attendance is entered on to MIS • MIS messages sent to parents who have failed to contact the school regarding their child's absence • First day absence phone contact with parents, following up unexplained absences where no text message/phone call has been returned. • SLT and class/form teachers contacted with specific attendance queries and necessary follow ups required • Supporting staff with registration queries, support the interventions of the class teachers. • Logging attendance of all pupils going out /in school for medical, dental or visits • Daily liaison with other settings for pupils educated off site to ensure AM and PM registers are provided within set time parameters and pupils who fail to attend with reasons unknown are followed up through the first day contact systems. • Daily Late process, log and send actions for relevant staff.
	Designated Attendance Lead	• Safeguarding home visits as required. • Focused casework interventions with SA/PA pupils and families. • Phone call contact with pupils/parents • Home visits • Instigation of legal proceedings • Tracking of actions and interventions and feedback to pastoral staff. • Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with Safeguarding requirements.

When	Whom	Actions Expected
WEEKLY	Class/Form teacher	• Ensure all members of the class know the school target and their current attendance • Monitor/follow up identified pupil absence by contacting parents where appropriate. •
	Pastoral Staff	• Informing SLT and EWS of pupil patterns of absence. • Provide weekly pupil attendance figures for DAL for attendance, class teachers and pupil rewards • Discuss punctuality issues with identified pupils and parents • Pupil rewards • Provide weekly punctuality data for the DAL for attendance, class teacher and pupil • Update information on attendance displays and on website
	DAL	• Monitoring and tracking of staff not completing registers in line with Safeguarding requirements. • Liaison with EWO, pastoral staff and curriculum leaders regarding support work with identified pupils • Determine priority actions for the following week

When	Whom	Actions Expected
HALF TERMLY	DAL	• Maintain a high profile of attendance as a significant contributor to pupil achievement • Use attendance data to identify and act to improve the attendance of vulnerable pupils • Ensure that all teaching staff focus on attendance in planning and pedagogy • Determine priority actions for the next half term
	Pastoral Staff	• Monitor and track attendance SA /PA action plans • Liaise with EWS to share information and agree joint actions re action plans and pupils causing concern

TERMLY	Designated Attendance Lead	• The importance of attendance is underpinned by awareness of safeguarding issues for all pupils both in school and those attending off site provision • School attendance review alongside the EWO • Ensure attendance is given a high profile as a key driver of school improvement and provide support and guidance to SLT, for plans to raise attendance • Ensure that the attendance policy is implemented across the school and systems are operating effectively • Report to SLT on attendance matters • Ensure school prospectus, parents' welcome booklet and school newsletters, promote attendance • Ensure attendance features at ALL parents' evenings • Determine priority actions for the next term
	Headteacher	• Ensure that attendance maintains a high profile as a key driver of school improvement through close monitoring and scrutiny of attendance data in conjunction with SLT and Governors