

# Attendance Policy

## Betley CE Primary School

### Summary Document



**Written by:** Sam Ray

**Date:** 1<sup>st</sup> September 2025

**Next review due by:** July 2026

### Every day matters

At Betley, we know that every day in school matters. Regular attendance helps children to learn, build strong friendships, grow in confidence and feel a valued part of our school family.

Our school attendance target is 96%, but we also understand that there can sometimes be genuine barriers that make attending school difficult. When this happens, we want families to know that we are here to listen, help and work together to find the right support.

We aim to be supportive, fair and consistent in our approach. Good attendance is a partnership between school, children and families, and by communicating with us early, we can work together to give every child the best possible opportunity to believe, achieve and belong.

### The school day

| ON SITE BY | SCHOOL STARTS | REGISTER CLOSES |
|------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 8:45am     | 8:50am        | 9:06am          |

- Children should be in their classroom and ready to learn at 8:50am.
- Arrival after the register has closed is recorded as an unauthorised late mark.

### If your child is absent

- Record the absence on Compass before 9:00am on the first day, giving the reason and expected length of absence.
- Please continue to keep school informed for the length of the absence.
- If we have not received a reason, school will follow up the absence as part of our safeguarding procedures.
- Medical evidence is not normally required for illness, although school may request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt.

### Appointments and planned absence

- Please arrange medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible.
- If an appointment must take place during the school day, your child should miss only the time necessary for the appointment.
- Leave during term time can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and must be requested in advance.
- Holiday requests should be made in writing using the school's Holiday Request Form. Family holidays are unlikely to be authorised.
- School cannot authorise leave retrospectively.

### **Who can I speak to?**

Attendance Champion: Gemma Whittingham

Email: [headofschool@betley.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:headofschool@betley.staffs.sch.uk)

Please contact us early if there is anything making attendance difficult. We want to work with you to remove barriers wherever possible.

### **How we monitor attendance**

- 96% – school may speak with your child and contact home to discuss any concerns or support needed.
- Below 96% – a letter is sent to raise concerns and explain how attendance can be improved.
- Below 93% – attendance is formally monitored and the Attendance Champion will contact parents.
- If attendance does not improve – we may arrange a meeting, agree targets and involve the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Below 85% – a formal meeting with parents will be arranged.

### **Persistent absence**

A child is classed as persistently absent when they miss 10% or more of their schooling, for any reason. We will look at the individual circumstances, identify barriers and work with families and other services where appropriate.

### **Support comes first**

- We recognise that children with SEND, medical needs or mental health difficulties may face additional barriers to attendance.
- Reasonable adjustments and individual support may be considered, including pastoral support, phased returns or other appropriate arrangements.
- Where absence becomes a concern, we will work with families to understand the reasons and agree practical steps to improve attendance.
- Safeguarding concerns will always be acted upon in line with school procedures.

### **Unauthorised absence and penalty notices**

- Unauthorised absence includes unexplained absence, unauthorised term-time holidays and arriving after the register has closed.
- The national threshold is 10 sessions of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks.
- When that threshold is reached, school will consider whether a penalty notice or another attendance intervention is appropriate. Each case is considered individually.
- Penalty notices for unauthorised absence are £160, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.
- Parents can receive up to two fines for the same child within a three-year period. Further legal action may be considered if attendance does not improve.

## What parents and carers can do

- Make school attendance a priority and ensure your child arrives on time.
- Tell us promptly whenever your child cannot attend.
- Keep contact details and emergency contacts up to date.
- Talk to us early if your child is anxious about school or if family circumstances are affecting attendance.
- Engage with support offered by school and the Local Authority.

### Our approach

We aim to be supportive, fair and consistent. Good attendance is a partnership between school, children and families, and early communication gives us the best chance of helping.