



## Parents/Carers Guide to Attendance

We want to share some important information about why coming to school is so important.

At St Bernadette's RC Primary, we care a lot about pupils coming to school every day. We work hard to make school a calm, friendly, and supportive place where everyone can learn and do their best. We expect pupils to come to school every day and be on time so they can learn as much as possible.

Attendance (Academic Year)	Equals this many days absent	Equals this many weeks absent (approx.)	Equals this many lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	60 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	120 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	180 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	240 lessons
70%	57 days	12 weeks	360 lessons

Any pupil whose attendance is below 90% is considered as a 'persistent absentee'

### Why is good attendance important?

Good attendance and being on time are very important for doing well in school and building good habits for the future.

Every lesson is important. Being on time for school makes a big difference. Missing part or all of a lesson can harm your child's learning.

Through regular attendance your child can:

- ✓ Build friendships and feel part of a community
- ✓ Learn new things and enjoy academic success
- ✓ Develop life skills, respect, self-discipline
- ✓ Minimise the risk of engaging in anti-social behaviour.
- ✓ Engage in extra-curricular activities that may not be available to them outside of school

### When your child is absent.

- By law, schools must record all absences and the reasons for them.
- The school—not the parent—decides whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Parents need to provide clear reasons for their child's absence so it can be recorded correctly.



- If attendance is a concern, the school may ask for medical proof before making a decision.
- If parents don't inform the school about an absence, it will be marked as unauthorised.

## Why is Punctuality Important?

The school day starts at 08:55, but gates are open from 08:45.

We expect all children to arrive at school on time, ready to start their day. Being on time helps your child stay prepared and focused for learning. Good punctuality leads to better attendance, which is important for your child's success.

If a child arrives late after the register closes without a good reason, it will be marked as an unauthorised absence ('U'), which affects their attendance record. Even if your child comes to school every day but is often late, you could be reported to the local authority because of the unauthorised absences.

### Arriving on time:

- Sets good habits for adult working life
- Maximises learning time
- Helps your child develop friendships and relationships
- Boosts your child's confidence and self-esteem

### Arriving late:

- Puts your child at an immediate disadvantage to other children who have arrived on time.
- Means your child misses important information at the start of lessons
- Can be embarrassing for your child
- Disrupts the lessons for other pupils
- Can damage your child's confidence and self-esteem





## What happens if my child has unauthorised absences?

By law, all children aged 5 to 16 must get a full-time education. Parents and carers must make sure their child goes to school regularly and on time every day.

The Local Authority (LA) in your area makes sure parents follow this rule. If your child doesn't attend school often, the LA could take legal action against you.

We're here to help if you have any worries about your child's attendance. Please tell the school about any absences as soon as possible, including the reason and if your child will be late.

We want to work with you to solve any problems stopping your child from coming to school. Talking openly with us can fix issues quickly.

How can you help your child have good attendance?

- ✓ Speak to your child about the importance of school
- ✓ Take an interest in your child's schoolwork and their day at school.
- ✓ Celebrate their successes
- ✓ Tell your child that you do not approve of absence from school for no reason
- ✓ Report your child's absence by 9am each day they are off school
- ✓ If you are not sure an absence is appropriate, ask school for advice
- ✓ Provide school with more than one emergency contact for your child. This will ensure we can always speak to someone.
- ✓ Work with school to ensure your child overcomes any barriers to attending school.
- ✓ Always be honest about the reasons for absence. Do not be tempted to 'cover up' for your child. We cannot help if you are not honest.
- ✓ Discuss any planned absences with school.
- ✓ Do not plan any term time holidays. They will not be authorised.
- ✓ Try and make as many appointments as possible outside of school hours. If an appointment is unavoidable, please provide school with a copy of the appointment. Your child should attend before and after any appointments if possible.



## How you can expect school to support your child's school attendance.

### Attendance Graduated Response

Percentage Attendance	Number of School Days Missed		What school will do
100%	0 Days	Excellent	Pupils in this category will be eligible for a range of rewards and incentives. Attendance information will be sent to parents weekly via the Arbor APP
95%	9 Days	Satisfactory	Pupils in this category will be eligible for a range of rewards and incentives. Attendance information will be sent to parents weekly via the Arbor AP
Attendance between 95% and 91%			Attendance information will be sent to parents weekly via the Arbor APP When attendance drops below 95% the school will put in place the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attendance concern letter will be sent to parents/carers</li> <li>Attendance will be discussed with pupils and regular meetings will be arranged to support them with improving their attendance</li> <li>Praise pupils and parents for making positive changes</li> <li>Meetings with parents</li> <li>Conduct home visits</li> <li>Offer of Early Help to all parents. School is committed to supporting parents and pupils at all levels</li> </ul> Issue a Notice to Improve with the Local Authority where absences have been recorded as unauthorised
90%	19 Days	Poor	Attendance information will be sent to parents weekly via the Arbor APP When absence drops below 91% the school will put in place the following actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite parents into school for a meeting with the Trust Attendance <a href="#">Lead</a> to discuss attendance and punctuality concerns and implement support</li> <li>Parents will be asked to provide medical evidence to support their child's absences</li> <li>Meet with pupils to discuss concerns and gain pupil voice</li> <li>Conduct home visits</li> <li>Praise pupils for making positive changes</li> <li>Refer to external services to address any wider concerns that may be impacting on attendance</li> <li>Complete an Attendance Contract</li> </ul> Discuss legal intervention with the LA where absences are unauthorised and there is a lack of engagement
85%	28 Days	Very Poor	
80%	38 Days	Unsatisfactory	
75%	46 Days	Unacceptable	

**On the 19<sup>th</sup> August 2024, a new National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence was introduced. This includes the following:**

- **Penalty for Absences:** You may receive a penalty notice for 10 sessions (5 school days) of unauthorised absence in any 10-week period. Unauthorised late marks are included in these sessions' 'U' code. These absences can span different terms or school years. For example, 2 sessions in the summer term and 8 in the autumn term.
- **Penalty Rates:** The penalty is £160 if paid within 28 days and £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued for the same child within three years, the penalty is £160 with no discount.
- **Limit on Penalties:** A parent can receive a maximum of 2 penalty notices for the same child within a 3-year period. For a third or subsequent offence, other actions, such as prosecution or other legal interventions, will be considered.



## WHAT THE NEW RULES MEAN FOR ME

1

### I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for a week

Your holiday will not be authorised and you must talk to the school before you book anything.

Because your child will miss 5 school days you will be given a penalty notice fine.

The fine is £160 but if you pay it within 21 days it will be reduced to £80

£160



2

### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE

10 IN 10

If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks and their absences are unauthorised, the school will consider prosecution

1 day = 2 sessions

### A PENALTY FOR EACH CHILD

3



+£160 +£160 +£160 +£160

4 children & 1 parent = £640

Reduced to £320 if paid within 21 days

4

### FOR A FAMILY OF TWO PARENTS



+£160



+£160



+£160



+£160

4 children &  
2 parents =  
£1,280

Reduced to £640 if paid  
within 21 days

5

If in any period of not more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence or pattern of irregular attendance...

### SECOND TIME

2 parents and

1 child = £320

2 children = £640

3 children = £960

4 children = £1,280

No discount for early payment



### THIRD TIME

A penalty notice fine will not be given.  
Instead your case will be taken to court.  
A magistrate can fine each parent £2,500 for each child.

1 parent & 4 children = £10,000

2 parents & 4 children = £20,000