



ATTENDANCE POLICY

Date of last review	February 2024	Review period	Two years
Date of next review	February 2026	Committee	School Improvement
Policy type	Statutory		

Jesus said, 'I am the Good Shepherd... I know my sheep and my sheep know me.' John 10.14

Our school vision

We are inspired to be a vibrant, joyful community in which we know and love one another, leading together and growing together by:

- Appreciating everyone and everything around us
- Making one another feel safe
- Sharing, so no one feels left out
- Living well together in love
- Moving forward together in hope

Introduction

We want all the children attending Bayford School to achieve their full potential. It is therefore vitally important that they attend school regularly, providing they are fit and healthy enough to do so.

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

The government expects schools and local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence

The government also expects:

- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons

We hope that these guidelines clearly explain our joint responsibilities and the school's procedures should your child be absent. If a parent wishes to discuss any of the points raised, they should contact the school office.

School Responsibilities

Throughout the school day, we have the responsibility to ensure the physical, moral and spiritual development of all the children, together with giving equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum. The curriculum is very carefully planned and a great deal of time is spent assessing individual children's needs in order to ensure their continued progress. This is a heavy responsibility and is only possible if we all pursue the goal of regular attendance.

Attendance is monitored very carefully. Where concerns are noted, our Local Authority Attendance Improvement Officer will visit the school in order to carry out county monitoring of

attendance records and to discuss the concerns. We are always anxious if a child is absent from school, as it is impossible to make up completely for the time they have missed. Issues about attendance are always followed up by the Attendance Improvement Officer.

Parental Responsibilities

All parents of children of compulsory school age are required to ensure that they receive full time education by regular school attendance. It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their children arrive on time and in a condition to learn. Parents are expected to work in partnership with the school in the education of their children. Parents must inform the school of the reason for a child's absence on the first day of absence by 8.45am.

Informing the School of your child's absence

Only the school may approve absence, so it is very important that parents keep us informed each time their child does not attend. In the case of illness and/or medical or dental appointments, please follow this procedure:

- If your child is ill, please ring the school secretary before the start of school on the first morning of absence and give some idea of when he/she might return. If we do not receive an explanation, then the absence will be treated as unauthorised.
- In the case of medical/dental appointments please let us know as soon as possible in advance. These appointments should be made outside school hours if possible.

Illness

If your child has a contagious illness, e.g. measles, rubella, chicken pox, mumps, vomiting, diarrhoea, impetigo etc., please refer to NHS guidance concerning how long they should be kept off school. More information is available from the school office or online:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Unauthorised Absence

The Governing Body have decided that in line with Government advice and OFSTED guidance, the following are some examples of unacceptable reasons for your child's absence:

- Holidays
- Shopping
- Looking after family
- Family outings
- Birthday celebrations
- Getting up late

These absences will therefore be treated as unauthorised.

We believe that the education of the children is of the utmost importance, and that the children will only achieve their full potential if they all attend regularly and on time.

Term Time Holidays

Bayford School will NOT authorise holiday leave of absence during term time except in exceptional circumstances. Final decisions will be at the discretion of the Headteacher.

Penalty Notices

At Bayford School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. If a pupil has at least 15 sessions (half day = 1 session) unauthorised absence in the current and previous term (including unauthorised holidays), the Headteacher may ask the LA to issue a Penalty Notice. The penalty is £60 for each parent if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days. If the penalty is not paid the LA may prosecute the parents for their child's irregular attendance.

Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances do occasionally arise and these will be considered by the Headteacher, providing adequate notice of permission is sought. Applications need to be made to the Headteacher. There are sometimes opportunities for children to compete in sports events, shows or take examinations that cannot take place after school hours or in school holidays. These circumstances will be given due consideration, but authorisation may not necessarily be granted.

Registration and Lateness

The teaching staff are required to mark the register at the beginning of every morning and afternoon. This is a statutory requirement which must be completed according to county guidance. The registers have to show whether an absence is authorised or not. We are obliged to provide figures concerning absence to the DfE (Department for Education) on a regular basis.

Registers will be called at 9:00am. If your child arrives after this time, they should enter through the front school door and report to the office. If a child arrives after 9:00am parents should sign the 'Late' book at reception. Any child who arrives after 9:10am will be recorded as having an unauthorised absence for that whole session.

Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)

Bayford School works in partnership with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO) for individual pupils and the whole school. The AIO carries out an effective consultation visit on a regular basis. When attendance does not improve sufficiently and after discussion with the AIO, the school will make a referral for the AIO to work with the family on a formal basis.