



Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

## WHOLE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

*By law, all children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must get a suitable full time education. As a parent, you are responsible for making sure this happens and if you fail to ensure a child of compulsory school age attends school regularly, legal action may be taken by the Local Authority.*

At Buckshaw we expect children to attend school every day, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We feel that the most important way to promote good attendance is to ensure that both pupils and parents have a positive relationship with school.

Research shows that pupils who attend school regularly are more likely to do well in the future. Regular attendance helps children to develop their confidence and to make and keep lasting friendships.

We would like to emphasise the important role you play in your child's education. In order to feel confident and secure your child needs to see the relationship between home and school. Good communication between families and school helps to ensure a smooth transition and also enables the teacher to learn about each child from the adult that knows them best.

What school expects from our families:

- It is vital that your child attends school regularly.
- Your child is on time every day.
- Inform school if your child is going to be late or absent.
- Pick your child up on time at the end of the day.
- Avoid leave in term time.

## WHAT IS 'GOOD' ATTENDANCE?

Anything less than 100% attendance means that your child is missing out on their education.

For example, 90% attendance is the same as missing half a day each week, or one whole month a year off school.

Punctuality is also very important. Children in KS1 start school at 9.00am promptly and finish at 3.15pm. Children in KS2 start at 8.55am and finish at 3.20pm. If your child attends school late (before 9.30am) they will be marked as late 'L'. Registers close at 9.30am. If your child arrives after that time they will receive a mark 'U' that shows them to be on site, but this will not count as a present mark and will be unauthorised. Did you know, that being just 15 minutes late each morning means your child would miss the equivalent of 10 days from school each year.

## IF YOUR CHILD IS ABSENT

If you know your child is going to be absent from school, you should:

- If your child is absent for any reason you **MUST** contact school straight away to explain why your child will be absent. This can be done via telephone, the school app, or email. If not, we will contact you.
- Complete the 'Medical Appointment Notification Form' (via the consent form on the school app) to inform school if your child has a doctor's appointment etc. School may ask for supporting evidence before an absence is authorised. For example, prescriptions or appointment cards or similar.

Be Aspirational ★ Be Resilient ★ Be You

School will contact parents if they are in any doubt as to the whereabouts of a child.

### PERSISTENT ABSENCES

The minimum attendance level which is expected at our school is 96%. It is when attendance falls below this level that school will start to monitor closely the amount of time children have off school. School may use strategies such as parenting contracts, attendance panels and referrals to the local authority attendance team in order to support parents in improving attendance.

The Department for Education determined that from September 2015 a pupil becomes a persistent absentee when their attendance falls below 90%. When attendance nears this level, children have already missed significant amounts of schooling; meaning that their educational progress is at risk. We need parents' full support in ensuring that attendance does not reach this level. Parents may be asked to attend an Attendance Panel meeting to discuss their child's attendance.

### LEAVE IN TERM TIME

Leave in term time is not a 'right'. Absence from school can have a serious impact on your child's education. All requests for leave in term time **must be made in advance of confirming any arrangements** and may be granted at the Headteacher's discretion dependent on the circumstances.

Changes to the Regulations mean that schools can **only** authorise leave in term time if the circumstances surrounding the request are considered to be **exceptional**. Application forms for a leave of absence are available from the school office and website and should be completed a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the leave.

### THE NEXT STEP

If the attendance of a pupil is low, the parents will be contacted and asked to meet with school staff to see how this can be improved. Support will be offered to both parents and pupils as required. The use of a 'Parent/School Agreement' may also be considered.

If concerns remain, school may have to consider referral to external agencies, such as the Local Authority Pupil Attendance Support Team.

The use of Penalty Notices may also be considered under certain circumstances, including where leave is taken without agreement.

### REWARDS FOR GOOD ATTENDANCE

It is vital that our pupils understand the importance of good attendance too. This year we have introduced rewards such as class attendance of the week, pupil certificates and awards for significant improvements (even if they do not necessarily meet the whole school target of 96%). We hope that involving your children in the importance of their attendance will in turn support our parents. Please remember, you can approach school if you would like any support in maintaining your child's good attendance. Please contact Miss Deane to discuss.

The Whole School Attendance Policy is available on our school website.

If you have any questions about your child's attendance please do not hesitate to contact Miss Deane in the school office.

Yours faithfully



Miss C Deane  
School Business Manager