



## **BEMBRIDGE CE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **POLICY ON ATTENDANCE**

Bembridge Primary seeks to be a welcoming Church of England School where we provide a safe and Christian community for all.

#### **Introduction**

We expect all children on roll to attend every day when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We encourage and expect our children to maintain high levels of attendance and at all times emphasise the need for children to be in school. We will also make the best provision we can for those children who, for whatever reason, are prevented from coming to school.

#### **Why must my child go to school?**

Any absence from school has many serious consequences for your child's education and will not be encouraged by the school.

- a. Your children could miss the beginning of a new topic or the teaching of a new skill, important coursework or even an examination on return he/she will be behind the rest of the class.
- b. It is very difficult and sometimes impossible to catch up on this learning.
- c. It puts additional demands on the teacher to help the children catch up, which means the rest of the class miss out on teacher attention.

#### **Education (Pupil Registration) Regulation 1995**

Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.

#### **What is meant by the school attendance target?**

The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The attendance targets are then agreed with the LA link inspector as well. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years. The school considers carefully the attendance figures for other similar schools when setting its own targets. Our attendance target for the year 2015-2016 is 96%.

### **What is good attendance?**

Attendance figures do not mean the same as examination results and it can be easy for parents to make a mistake when looking at percentage attendance for their child. For example 80% in an examination is very good, but 80% attendance is very poor!

<b>100%</b>	<b>In school every day</b>
<b>95%</b>	<b>Minimum expected attendance</b>
<b>90%</b>	<b>Absent from school for 19 ½ days in a year.</b>
	<b>Absent from school for ½ day every week</b>
<b>80%</b>	<b>Absent from school for 39 days in a year</b>

### **What do I do if my child is going to be absent from school?**

When a child is absent unexpectedly, the parent must phone the office before 9:30am on the day of absence to explain reasons for absence. This must be followed by a written note explaining absence when your child returns to school.

In cases of a planned absence, e.g. hospital appointment, a note must be sent to the school prior to the day of absence explaining reasons for absence. Please make appointments out of school time whenever possible, if they must be made in school time try to arrange for afternoons after 1:15pm.

If the school is not informed of an absence by 9:30am office staff will endeavour to contact parents to ask reason for absence. If no reason is given by the time a child returns to school the absence may be recorded as unauthorised.

We believe that children need to be in school for all sessions, so that they can make the most progress possible.

### **What will happen if my child is absent from school for a long period?**

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for a long period, the school will contact the support services, to see if arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

### **Can I request leave of absence for my child during term time?**

We do understand that there are circumstances under which a parent may legitimately request leave of absence for a child, for example to attend the funeral of a relative etc. We expect parents to contact the school at least a week in advance to request leave of absence and complete and return a leave of absence form for school authorisation.

Family holidays should take place during the school holiday dates. These are published a year in advance on the County Council website. Please be mindful that absence due to a holiday is not, and never has been a parent's entitlement and will not be authorised.

Any unauthorised leave of absence will be referred to the Local Authority for a fixed penalty notice.

### **What will the school do if they have concerns regarding a child's attendance?**

Registers are inspected on a regular basis by school staff and half termly by the Educational Welfare Service. If attendance is showing signs of concern the Local Authority procedures will be adhered to:

**STAGE 1:** School will arrange a meeting with the parent and/or send a letter explaining concerns and the expectation for improvement. *If attendance improves no further action is taken.*

If attendance does not improve the school moves to:

**STAGE 2:** A formal School Attendance Meeting is called by the school to find out why there has been no improvement and to ask if the family need the support of other agencies to improve attendance. *If attendance improves no further action is taken.*

If attendance does not improve the school moves to:

**STAGE 3:** The school refers the case to the Educational Welfare Service who will visit the family to make a formal assessment.

### **Who monitors and reviews attendance?**

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to report to governors, who monitor overall attendance.

Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class, and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

**OCTOBER 2015**

**NEXT REVIEW OCTOBER 2016**