



Attendance Rationale

Why is attendance important?

Attendance is an important aspect of school life. For a child to reach their full educational potential a high level of school attendance is essential. At Bowhouse Primary School we are committed to providing an education of the highest quality and endeavour to provide an environment where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Every child has a right and is entitled to an education. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Frequently missing school is associated with poorer academic performance, a higher likelihood of dropping out of school early, and a lower probability of going on to further education. There is a strong connection between attendance and attainment. For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school **every day** unless the reason for the absence is **unavoidable**. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

Parents, pupil and school responsibility

Parents, pupils and school staff share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. Everyone has a role to play. Parents have a responsibility to ensure pupils attend school regularly and on time. School is required, by law, to maintain accurate records for each pupil's attendance. Parents and school must work together to keep informed of any unavoidable pupil absence.

Benefits of attending school

Pupils who attend school regularly, make better progress socially and academically. They find school work, learning and friendships easier to cope with and find transitioning from Primary to Secondary and then Further Education to employment more successful.

Everyday Counts!



Excellent attendance and punctuality is the key to ensuring that children and young people have the best life chances and opportunities. At Bowhouse, we strongly believe having access to and receiving a good education is the best way we can ensure all children achieve the best possible outcomes, empowering them to make the best and most positive choices about their future lives. It is the responsibility of all schools, parents/carers and pupils to work in partnership to ensure that all our young people receive an appropriate education suitable to their needs.



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Parental responsibility when reporting an absence

A child not attending school is considered a safeguarding matter. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. If your child is absent, you must:

- Contact the school office (01324 508710) bowhouseprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk as soon as possible on the first day of absence
- Keep school updated about expected return to school

If your child is absent

If we haven't heard from you, we will:

- Send a Groupcall message asking for you to notify us why your child is absent – this can be a call to the office (01324 508710) or an email (bowhouseprimaryschool@falkirk.gov.uk)
- If a reason is not given, a further Groupcall/email will be sent
- If a reason is still not given, you will get a repeated Groupcall message until you respond with a reason
- If a reason is still not given by the end of the day, the reason will be logged as UNA (unexplained absence)

***Please note – we may try to contact all emergency contacts you have given us**

Authorised absence

This is defined by:

- Attendance at a children's hearing or review
- Immediate family weddings
- Bereavements
- Religious observance
- Short term exceptional domestic circumstances (e.g. period after an illness, a domestic situation causing **serious** disruption to the family home)
- Medically certified (admission to hospital)

Unauthorised absence

This is defined by:

- Holidays in term time
- Any absence the school has not been notified of
- Any child whose absence is on-going and remains unexplained for an extended period (10 days) will be referred to the authority as a child missing in education (CME)
- Taking the rest of the day off before or after a medical appointment
- Staying at home to care for younger or sick relatives
- Birthdays

Appointments

Attendance at an emergency appointment is authorised however, the pupil is expected to be in school before and after the appointment time. Routine appointments should be arranged out of school time.



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Home visit

In some circumstances a home visit may be appropriate (e.g. where we have failed to make contact with you and your child has been absent from school for several days). Staff may arrive at your door to find out why your child is absent and when they are due to return to school.

Holidays

Only in exceptional circumstances and authorised by the Headteacher, will holidays be recorded as an authorised absence. Generally, all holidays taken in term time will be recorded as unauthorised unless for religious or cultural reasons. Parents should submit a request to the Headteacher by phone, email or letter **before** the holiday takes place. A standard council letter will be sent due to an unauthorised holiday absence. Please remember holidays during term time may be disruptive to your child's learning.

Legal Framework

Parents have a legal responsibility to provide a reasonable excuse for a child's absence. Failure to attend school regularly 'without reasonable excuse' may be grounds for a referral to the Children's Reporter.

Team Around the Child Meeting

Where there are concerns about a child's non-attendance, it may be appropriate to have a TAC Meeting to discuss these issues.

Punctuality

The school day starts at 9am. Children who arrive after this time must report to the front office. Any child who arrives after 9:10am will be recorded as **Late**.

Medical

If you are reporting your child absent for medical reasons regularly, it may be appropriate for school to make contact with the school nursing team. The school may then contact the Community Paediatrician to discuss these concerns further. If it is felt there are no medical reasons for the absences, a referral to the Attendance Committee would be made.

If at any time you want to discuss your child's attendance, please don't hesitate to get in touch.