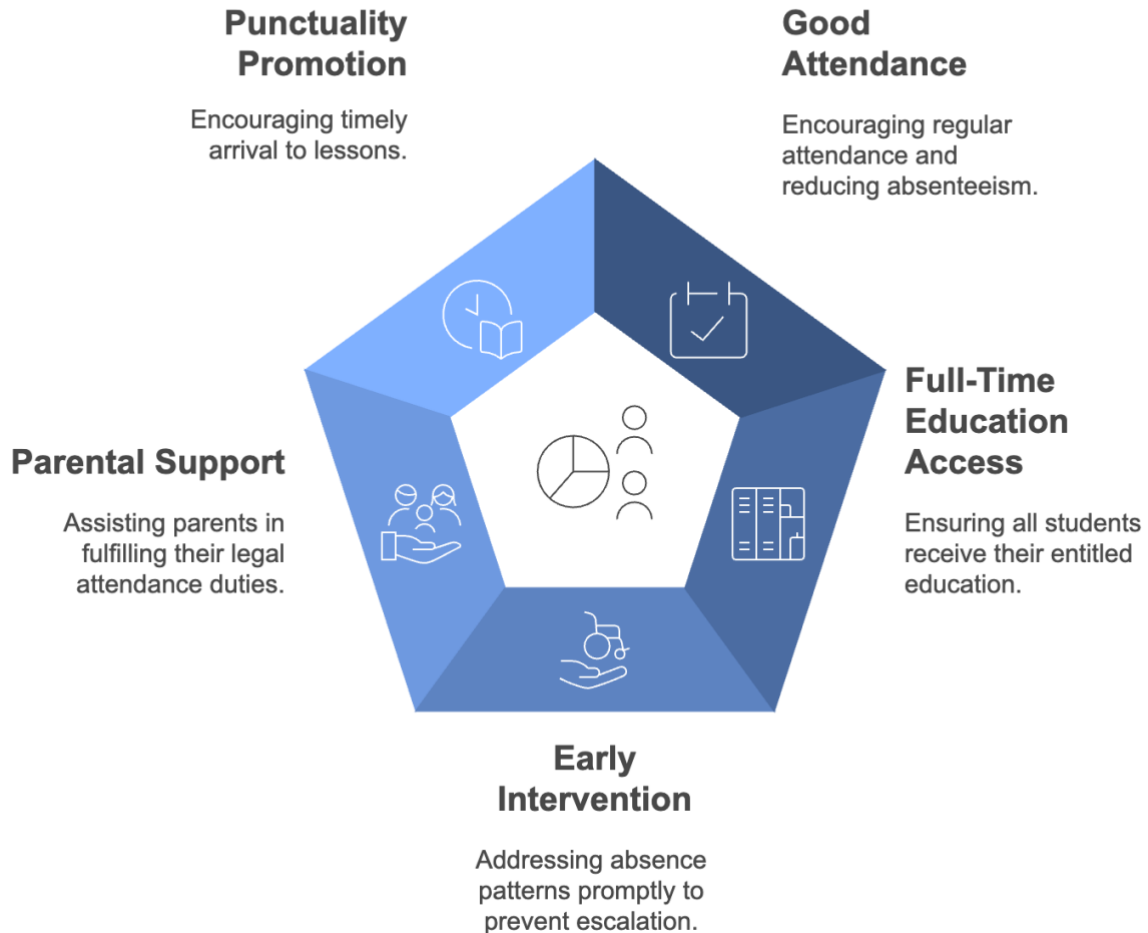




BUXLOW
Preparatory School

Attendance Policy
Buxlow Preparatory School & Nursery
September 2024

Attendance Improvement Strategy



General Statement

Every child has a fundamental right to be educated, and regular attendance is extremely important for children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them.

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

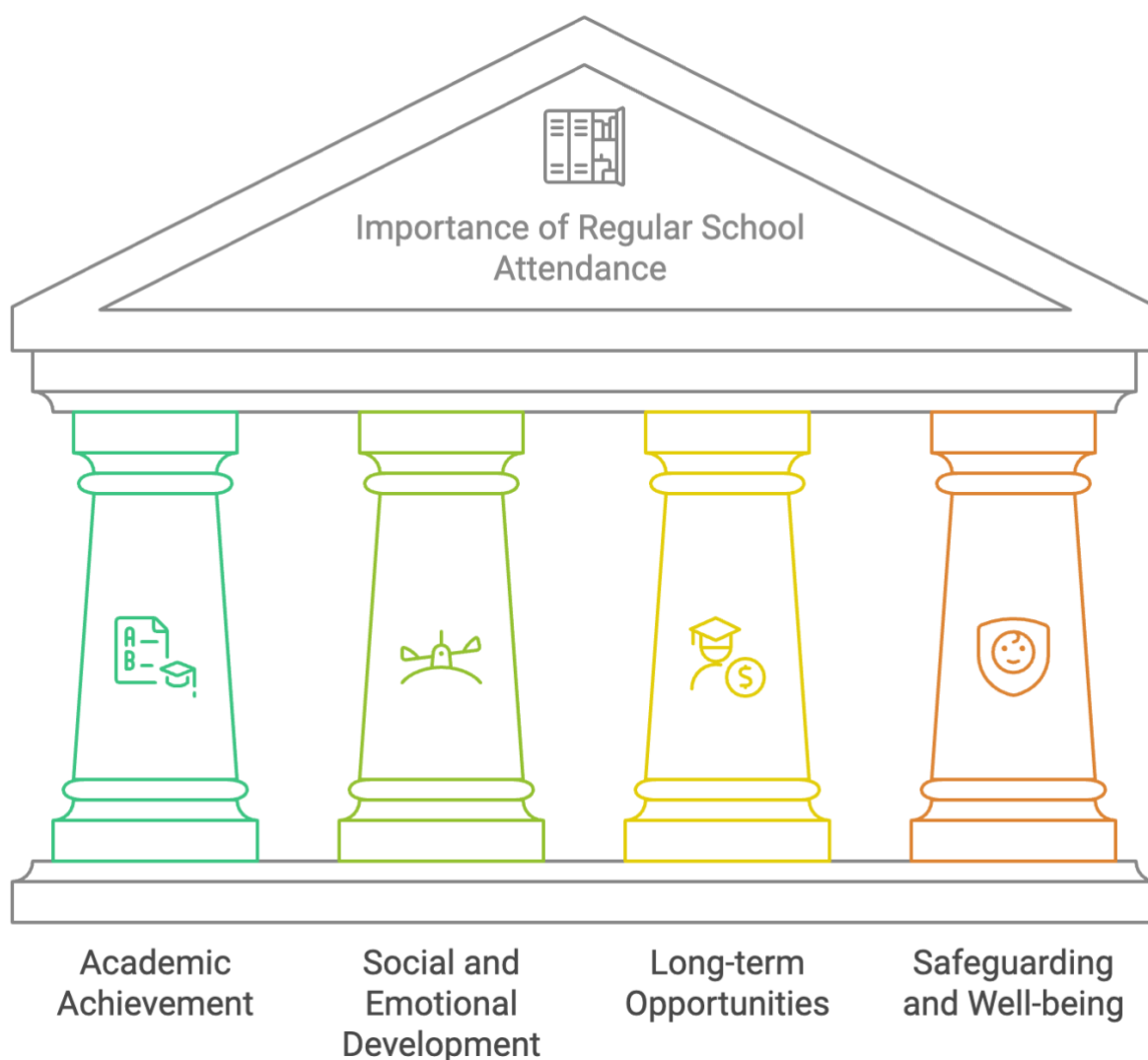
- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence.
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled (minimum 95% attendance)
- Acting early to address patterns of absence.
- Supporting parents in performing their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly.
- Promoting and supporting punctuality in attending lessons.

In addition to this, we are committed to:

- Working closely with external agencies, such as Early Help services, to provide targeted support for families facing challenges affecting attendance.

- Listening to the child's voice and involving pupils in discussions about their attendance to identify and address barriers effectively.
- Rewarding and recognizing good or improved attendance to foster a culture of positivity and motivation around attendance.
- Monitoring attendance data systematically to identify trends, evaluate interventions, and set specific targets for improvement.

The safety and well-being of all our pupils at Buxlow Preparatory School and Nursery is our highest priority. Staff will follow up unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner and identify and address concerns about children missing from education (see *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, September 2024, and the school's *Children Absent from Education Policy and Procedure*).



Importance of 95% School Attendance in the UK

In the UK, regular school attendance is essential for a child's education and development. The Department for Education (DfE) sets 95% as a benchmark for good attendance because lower attendance rates significantly impact academic

achievement, social development, and future opportunities. Here's why children should maintain at least 95% attendance

1. Academic Achievement

- Students with attendance below 95% are less likely to achieve good GCSE results. Each 10% drop in attendance corresponds to a significant decline in performance. For example:
- Pupils with 95% attendance achieve on average **one grade higher** in GCSE exams compared to those with 90%.

Cumulative Learning Loss:

- Missing just 5% of the school year equates to 9-10 days, which can disrupt learning continuity.
- Frequent absences make it harder for children to keep up with the curriculum, particularly in sequential subjects like mathematics and science.
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2. Social and Emotional Development

Peer Interaction:

- Regular attendance helps children build and maintain friendships, learn teamwork, and engage in group activities.

Confidence and Routine:

- Schools provide structure and routine, fostering resilience, self-discipline, and time management.
- Children with poor attendance often feel isolated and less connected to their peers and teachers.

3. Long-term Opportunities

Future Education and Employment:

- Employers and colleges view attendance as a sign of reliability and commitment.
- Research by the DfE shows that persistent absence correlates with lower rates of employment and training post-16.

4. Safeguarding and Well-being

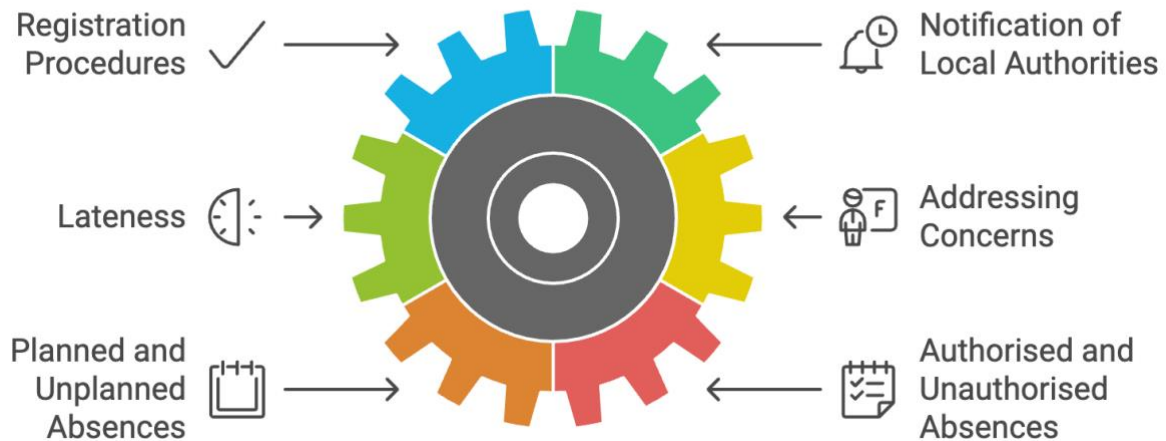
Protection and Monitoring:

- Schools play a vital role in safeguarding children. Poor attendance can be an indicator of wider issues, such as neglect or family challenges.

Access to Support Services:

- Regular attendance ensures that children benefit from health, counseling, and special education services when needed.

School Attendance Management



School Procedures

1. Registration Procedures:

Form Teachers will complete the electronic register at the start of the morning (08:30-08:45) and afternoon sessions. Any unexplained absences will be recorded as 'N' (no reason provided) until further clarification is obtained.

2. Notification of Local Authorities:

- We will notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and provide the required information.
- The local authority will also be informed when a pupil fails to attend school regularly or has been absent without permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

3. Lateness:

Pupils arriving after the register closes at 8:45 a.m. must report to the school office. Arrival after registration will result in an unauthorised mark unless a valid reason is provided.

4. Addressing Concerns:

- Parents or guardians are encouraged to discuss any concerns about their child's attendance as early as possible.
- The school will provide tailored support for children with attendance issues, working collaboratively with families and external agencies where necessary

5. Planned and Unplanned Absences:

- Parents must contact the school before 8:40 a.m. on the first day of any unplanned absence and each subsequent day.

- For planned absences, applications must be submitted in advance.

6. **Authorised and Unauthorised Absence:**

- Absences are unauthorised until an acceptable explanation is received. The Head has the final discretion to determine whether an absence is authorised.
- Family holidays during term time will not be authorised except in exceptional circumstances.

Monitoring and Review

Attendance is reviewed termly by the Deputy Head.

- If attendance falls to 90% or below, parents will be contacted to discuss concerns and agree on measures to improve attendance
- Persistent absence may result in referral to the local authority attendance officer
- Attendance data will be analysed termly to identify patterns, trends, and areas for improvement.
- Specific targets for improving attendance will be set and reviewed as part of the school improvement plan.

Support Strategies:

- Attendance improvement plans will be developed collaboratively with families for pupils at risk of persistent absence.
- Regular workshops or communication sessions will be offered to parents to help address common barriers to attendance.

Equality and Inclusion:

We recognize that some pupils, including those with SEND or from disadvantaged backgrounds, may face additional challenges affecting attendance. We will work to identify and address these barriers through personalized support and inclusive practices.

School Registration Procedures.

Form Teachers are required to complete the electronic register at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and enter reasons for absence. Where the reason is not known at the outset, an 'N' ('no reason provided') is entered. However, teachers are required to establish the reason as soon as possible and update the register accordingly. Children present for the registration period (08:30 – 08:45) will be marked as present using the code /. Children arriving after 08:45 will be marked late using code L. Children arriving after 09:00 will be marked as unauthorised using code U unless a satisfactory reason for lateness is provided.

School Registration Process



Start Morning Session



Enter Absence Reason



Update Absence Reason



Mark Present



Mark Late



Mark Unauthorized

Where a pupil joins or leaves the school the following actions will take place:

- All schools must notify the local authority within five days of adding a pupil's name to the admission register and provide held information.
- The register must include details of any change of address, including the full name of parent/s whom the pupil will be living with and the date of the change.
- Where a parent notifies the school that the pupil is registered at another school, the school must record the new school and the date when attendance started.
- All amendments made to the admission and attendance registers must include: the original entry; the amended entry; reason for the change and date; name and position of person making the amendment. The registers will be preserved for 6 years after the date on which an entry was made.

Children at risk of Absent from Education:

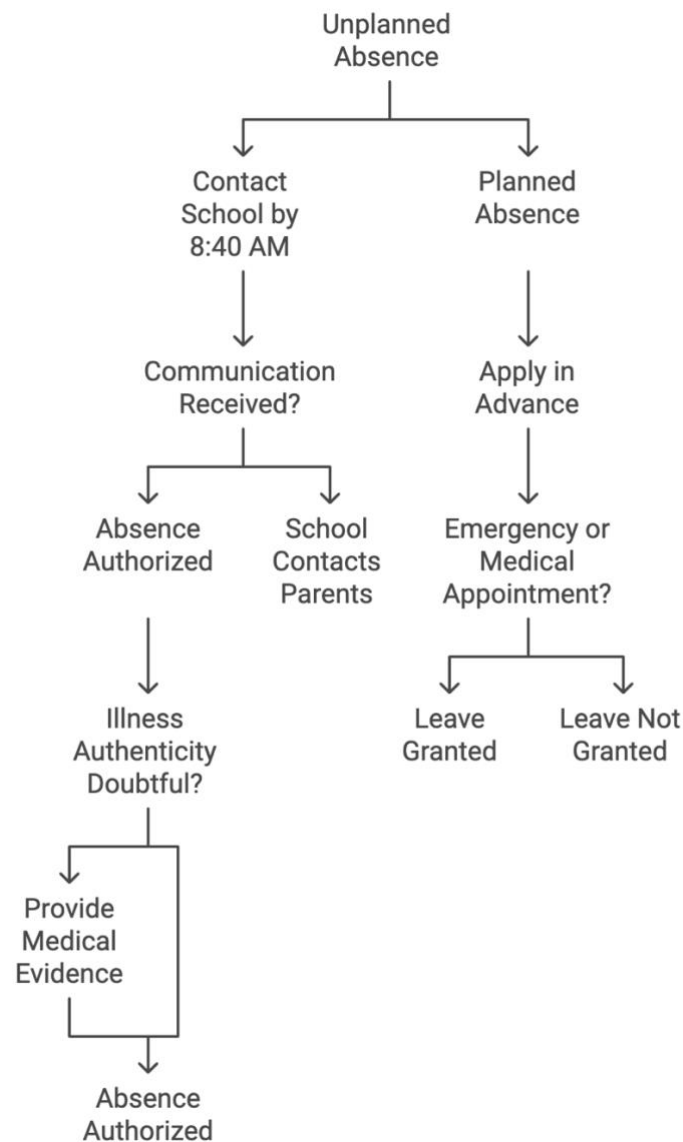
The school where reasonably practicable, will hold an emergency contact number for more than one person per pupil. The relevant local authority will be notified when a pupil moves school or when a pupil fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

Lateness Should a child be unavoidably late and miss the register (08:45 onwards), they must report directly to the school office where their attendance will be recorded on

the school register. Arrival after 09:00 will result in a 'Unauthorised' mark being recorded on the register.

Child Concern If for any reason a child has any concerns about attending school, it is important that parents or guardians discuss the problem with the school at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate measures can be put in place to address the issues and support the child.

What to do if a child has to be absent



Unplanned absence: If a child is unfit for school, the parent or guardian should contact the school before 8.40 a.m. on the pupil's first day of any absence which has not previously been agreed with the school, and each subsequent day of absence.

The School Secretary will contact parents or guardians on the first day and consecutive day of absence if there has been no communication from the parents or guardians explaining reasons for absence.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness. If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

Planned absence:

Leave may be granted in an emergency or for medical appointments which are unavoidably during school time but, wherever possible, appointments should be made outside of school hours. Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance.

5. What constitutes Authorised and Unauthorised Absence?

Authorised absences are those which the school agree are unavoidable, e.g. illness or family bereavement or medical appointments.

Unauthorised absences are those that the school considers unreasonable, to be determined by the Head.

An absence is unauthorised until an acceptable explanation is received, and it is for the school, not the parent/guardian, to decide whether an absence should be recorded as authorised or unauthorised.

Family holidays in term time will not be authorised and will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absences. Providing confirmation of the reason for the absence does not automatically register the absence as authorised; this is solely at the discretion of the Head.

6. Granting approval for term-time absence

The Head has a duty to ensure that term dates are protected, and leave of absence will not normally be granted in term time. Holidays are not considered a valid reason to authorise an approved absence. In exceptional circumstances parents should write directly to the Head explaining fully why the request is being made to remove a pupil from school in term time. The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the Head's discretion. Valid reasons may include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments
- Religious observance
- Family bereavement

Family holidays in term time will not be authorised and will be recorded in the register as unauthorised absences.

7. Monitoring and Review

The Form Teachers, in liaison with the Deputy Head have responsibility for monitoring the attendance of children in the school and will work with parents to resolve any difficulties.

Attendance is reviewed each term, and the Deputy Head will contact the parent or guardian should a child's attendance fall to 90% or below.

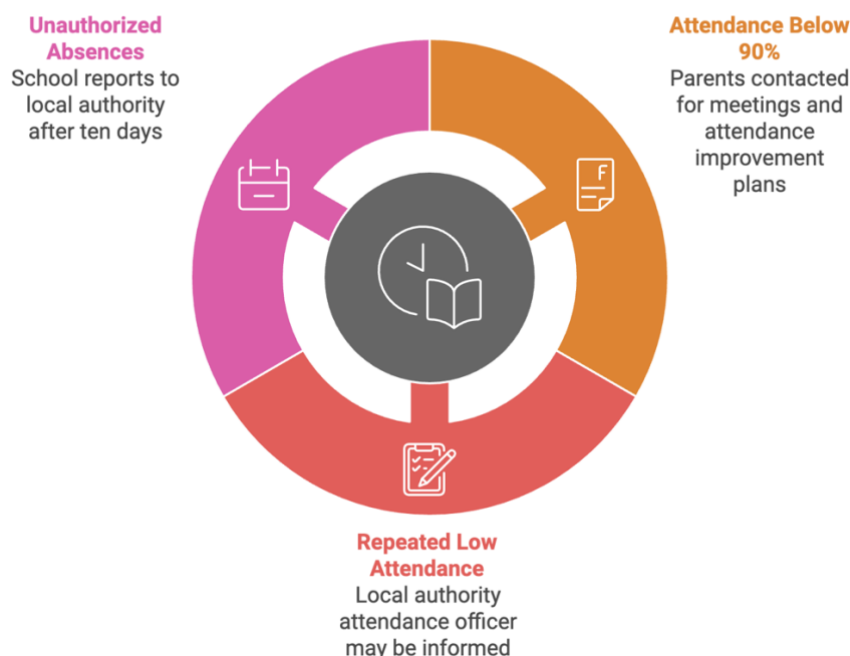
Where necessary, measures will be agreed to improve attendance which will continue to be monitored closely. If attendance falls below 90% in subsequent terms, parents will be contacted in writing and asked to meet with the Deputy Head or Head.

Where attendance repeatedly falls below 90% and there is concern regarding unauthorised absence, the local authority attendance officer will be informed at the discretion of the Head.

The law states that it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to ensure that a child attends school regularly and on time. Neglect of this responsibility will result in the school taking action to ensure attendance and ultimately can lead to further action being taken (Education Act 1996). Within these regulations, the School has a legal duty to report certain attendance concerns to the Local Authority:

- Ten days of unauthorised absence (other than for reasons of sickness or leave of absence);
- Failure to attend regularly;
- Deletion from the school register when the next school is not known

School Attendance Monitoring



Reviewed	September 2024
Reviewed by	Christine McLelland
Next review	September 2025