

Tel: 01234 300601
Email: office@balliolschool.co.uk
Website: www.balliolschool.co.uk
Headteacher: Mrs L Youngman

Dear parents/carers,

At Balliol Primary School, we firmly believe that regular school attendance is essential for the educational progress and overall wellbeing of our pupils. We hope that this letter helps you to keep in mind the key aspects of our attendance policy.

Why regular attendance matters

Consistent school attendance allows your child to:

- Fully engage in learning and make academic progress
- Develop critical social skills by interacting with their friends and teachers
- Grow in confidence in a supportive and nurturing school environment
- Build a sense of routine and responsibility, essential for future success

Attendance support

We understand that some pupils may face challenges that impact their attendance. Our school's attendance team is here to provide support and guidance to pupils and families in such situations. If you encounter any difficulties related to attendance, please do reach out to Mrs King at the school office or Mrs Anderson our Family Support Worker who will endeavour to support you.

Acceptable reasons for absence

We recognise that there are circumstances where a pupil's absence can't be avoided.

Acceptable reasons for being absent from school may include:

- **Illness:** when your child is unwell, either physically or mentally, and unable to attend school
- **Medical appointments:** if your child has a medical appointment that cannot be scheduled outside school hours, please notify us in advance and provide relevant documentation (e.g. an appointment card)
- **Religious observance:** we respect the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of our pupils. If your child needs to be absent for religious observance, please submit a request and the headteacher will review it
- **Exceptional circumstances:** in exceptional situations, such as family emergencies or unforeseen events, please contact the school immediately to discuss the absence

How to report unplanned absences

In the event of an unplanned absence, we ask that you follow these steps:

1. Contact the school: on the day of the absence, please call the school office before 8.30 to inform us about your child's absence
2. Provide a reason for absence: please provide a brief explanation for the absence, such as illness or family emergency, to help us maintain accurate records
3. Let us know if the child will be absent for more than 1 day

Term-time holidays

Term-time holidays are generally not authorised during the school year. Absences due to term-time holidays are disruptive to learning and lead to missed opportunities in the classroom.

However, we recognise that there may be exceptional and unavoidable circumstances that may require term time absence. In such rare cases, please submit a formal request to the headteacher well in advance.

Sanctions for unauthorised absence

A fine may be issued (known as a fixed-penalty notice) for unauthorised absence. If issued with one, you'll need to pay this directly to the local authority – £80 within 21 days, or £160 within 28 days.

The decision whether to issue a fine will take into account whether the national threshold has been met – namely 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a rolling period of 10 school weeks – as well as other factors.

Before a fine is issued, you may receive a notice to improve to give you a chance to engage with support.

My question hasn't been answered here

Please get in touch with Mrs King at the school office 01234 300601 or office@balliolschool.co.uk with any further questions, and we'll be happy to discuss them with you.

Thank you for your co-operation in making sure your child receives the best possible educational experience.

Yours sincerely,

The Balliol Team