

Beddington Infants' School

Attendance Policy

The vision for our school is rooted in an understanding of, and respect for, the incredible capacity of every child.

With a focus on basic skills and strong academic achievement our curriculum has evolved to enable each child to engage at a high level and therefore to achieve to his/her personal best. Our provision is inspired by the Italian **Reggio Emilia Approach**. It is an experiential provision for both children and adults.

'Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.' Benjamin Franklin

Children

- are respected as individuals with something valuable to say
- have a genuine input into the direction of their learning
- are empowered to engage fully with the learning process, to take personal responsibility and to develop skills for life.
- are given a variety of opportunities to explore the world in which they live, indoors and outside, developing positive attitudes to all weathers
- are supported in developing positive relationships with children and adults across the school
- are given regular, meaningful opportunities to express themselves

Our holistic approach is reflected in our aim that children leave Beddington Infants' School with the following seven gifts:



At Beddington Infants' School we are committed to supporting children and adults in every way we can. We believe that good foundations are essential and so take every opportunity to create learning opportunities to develop the necessary attitudes and skills for each child to achieve the Seven Gifts of Beddington Infants' School.

'The Government expects schools and local authorities to:

- promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence;
- ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- act early to address patterns of absence.
- parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.' Dept. for Education 'School Attendance' 2016.

Regular school attendance has always been important. Without it the efforts of the best teachers and best schools will come to nothing. Education provides a means of advancement for all young people. Pupils need to attend regularly if they are to take full advantage of the educational opportunities available to them in law. Irregular attendance undermines the educational process and leads to educational disadvantage. DfE - 'School Attendance'

Section 444 of the Education Act, 1996 states that parents/carers are responsible for their children attending school and arriving on time.

Good attendance is important because:

- statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%
- regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- regular attenders find school routines, school work and friendships easier to cope with
- regular attenders find learning more satisfying
- regular attenders are more successful in transferring between primary school,
- secondary school, and higher education, employment or training

Beddington Infants' School expects parents/carers to ensure that:

- Children attend school
- Children arrive at school on time
- Children are suitably clothed for school
- Children bring their Book Bags and Home/School Diary every day
- Children are collected on time

Celebrating Good Attendance

Each term we award certificates and books for 100% attendance and certificates for those who attended nearly every day of that term.

At the end of the year, further special certificates, and gifts, are awarded to those who have achieved 100% attendance for the whole year.

Monitoring Attendance

The registers are checked daily by the office staff and monitored regularly by the Assistant Head and the school Attendance Officer.

Parents/carers must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health. This can be done by phone or by emailing the school office (office@beddingtoninfants.org.uk) before the start of the school day.

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.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

Missing school for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents/carers of children who are not in school are:

- Expected to notify the school by phone or email on the first day of their child's absence
- Contacted on the first day of absence by the office if a reason for the absence has not been provided

If we are unable to reach the parents/carers, other emergency contacts as identified on the child's admission form will be contacted to ensure that we know why a child is absent. If no-one can be contacted the Assistant Head may contact the local MASH, as a child not attending school or being able to contact the family is a safeguarding issue.

Parents / carers of children who are regularly absent are:

- Notified by the school of the importance of regular attendance and they are monitored for improvement.

If attendance does not improve:

- A letter is sent to the parents/carers raising the child's level of attendance as a concern and inviting them to a meeting with the Attendance Officer to agree an Attendance Plan.

If there is still no improvement:

- Parents/carers are invited into school to meet with the Assistant Head and Attendance Officer to review the attendance plan and agree next steps.

If there is no improvement

- Legal action may be taken by the Attendance Officer on behalf of the school against parent/carers for failing to ensure the regular attendance of their child/children at school.

Are Holidays during Term Time Authorised?

Amendments to school attendance regulations were updated and reinforced from September 2015: (Pupil Registration) (England) regulations state that:

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances... The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are rare, significant, or unavoidable which means the event could not reasonably be scheduled at another time.

There is, however, no legal entitlement for time off in school time to go on holiday and in the majority of cases holiday will **not** be authorised.

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children out during school time.

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for leave of absence need to complete the 'Exceptional Leave of Absence Form' and return to the Head Teacher before making any travel arrangements

The Head Teacher will consider the request taking into account:

- The pupil's previous attendance history
- The time of the year regards any public or internal assessments
- Attendance and punctuality in the current and previous academic year
- The nature of the request and whether any other requests have been made.

In some cases, it may be appropriate for parents/carers to meet with the Headteacher, member of the Senior Leadership team (SLT) or Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to explain the requirement for leave and in those cases, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting to discuss the exact nature of the circumstances. The Head Teacher will put in writing the result of applications.

Parents/carers are also informed that if any leave is taken beyond the dates agreed, taken after the leave has been refused or before an application is made, a penalty notice could be issued to each parent for each child absent without authority.

The school **may** therefore issue a penalty notice or fine to each parent for each child who is absent due to taking a holiday during term time.

Lateness

Lateness disrupts a child's learning AND the learning of others in the class.

Children should be in school for the register to be called at 8.55 am and 1.15 pm.

(Nursery – 8.45 am and 12.30 pm)

Children arriving after the gate has closed enter the school through the main office entrance.

The Late Book needs to be signed by the adult, stating the time arrived, and giving a reason for the late attendance. The children are then admitted and taken to their classes. The number of 'minutes late' is recorded for each child in their SIMS record on each occasion they are late. **Please talk to a member of staff if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.**

10 minutes late each day is 50 minutes late each week which is more than 6 days a year. Each child's minutes late are recorded by a member of the office team.

Parents / carers of children who are persistently late are:

- Monitored by the school and will be spoken to informally to explain the importance of punctuality.

If punctuality does not improve:

- A letter is sent to the parents/carers raising the child's level of lateness and missed learning as a concern and inviting them to a meeting with The Education Welfare Officer to agree a punctuality plan.

If there is still no improvement:

- Parents/carers are invited into school to meet with the Assistant Head and Attendance Officer to review the punctuality plan and agree next steps.

Daily Procedures**Arriving at school**

Families wait in the grassed area at the front of the school. Once the gate is open the paths on both sides of the grassed area are used to reach the destination where your child enters school.

Nursery am	8.45 am – 11.45am	Nursery children are brought into the Nursery by parents / guardians when the gates are unlocked by staff.
Nursery pm	12.30 pm – 3.30 pm	
Reception	8.55 am– 3.15pm	Families walk the children to the classrooms. Gates are open at 8.45 am. A member of staff is at each classroom door to welcome the children. Towards the end of the year, we write to families to say that children who would like to go through the 'blue gate' with Years 1 and 2 are welcome to.
Years 1 & 2	8.55 am – 3.15pm	Children in Years 1 and 2 are accompanied to the blue gate by their parents/carers where they are welcomed by a member of staff from 8.45 am. Children make their own way in to the playground. Another member of staff is on duty in the playground. If it is raining, children go straight to the hall to sing songs. The bell is rung at 8.55 am promptly and the gate is closed. The children are collected from the playground (or hall) and taken to their classrooms.

Leaving school at the end of the day

All children are collected from the classrooms. Adults who know they are going to arrive late should telephone the school so that the children do not worry. The school is required to notify the Local Authority if children are not collected within **30 minutes** of the end of the school day. If no contact has been established with parents/carers then Social Services will be contacted and they will take the child to a place of safety if necessary.

It is essential that parents/carers ensure that the contact details we hold are up to date.

Children should be collected by a responsible person who is at least 16 years old. Families will be asked to create a list of those people who are allowed to collect each child. This list is held in the classroom so that staff can check it easily. Please ask for the list if you would like to amend it at any time.

The school makes every effort to ensure that children only go home with parents/carers or known approved adults. If children are being collected by someone for the first time we would expect to be informed of the situation and if we had not been, we would telephone the parents/carers for permission for the child to be collected by this adult.

Security

The gates at both sides of the school are locked during the day so that the only entry point is via the front door, which is also locked and monitored by the office staff. All visitors to the school sign in on arrival, are given a badge and sign out on departure.

School Closure in Exceptional Circumstances

These are rare but in extreme circumstances such as severe snowfalls or hurricanes, which can delay staff arriving at school, parents/carers would either be asked to wait with children until staff arrive or to take children home and telephone the school to check on the situation later in the day. If the staff were concerned about the building or grounds being unsafe, the appropriate area would be closed until safety checks had been made.

Notification of school closures due to extreme circumstances would be made to families via the Open Check service, Parent Comms App and where possible emails.

If closure of the premises became necessary during the day the school would contact families to collect children early via the Open Check service, Parent Comms App and where possible emails.

Planned School Closure

Families are notified of the term dates for the academic year in September – and often during the previous summer term.

Families are notified of school closure due to **INSET Days** as soon as dates have been arranged. INSET Days are usually planned to coincide with INSET Days at Holy Trinity School to make it easier for families with children at both schools.

Reviewed January 2020

Review September 2021