Beaconside Primary & Nursery School

As you will be aware, attendance for pupils in schools remains a key focus for the Government and Department for Education. The "Working Together to Improve School Attendance" guidance document was updated in July 2026 and remains central to our work at Beaconside in making sure every pupil can access a full-time education. Good attendance matters for learning, friendships and wellbeing — and it starts with school being a calm, safe and welcoming place where pupils want to be.

We know that some families face real barriers to regular attendance. At Beaconside we aim to understand and remove those barriers wherever we can. We will work in partnership with you to put support and reasonable adjustments in place, review them regularly and make sure any extra help is targeted to the pupil's needs.

The information below explains what we expect, how we track attendance, and what we will do if patterns of absence appear.

Our expectations

- Pupils should attend every day the school is open unless there is a good reason not to (illness, approved medical appointment, or another statutory reason).
- Wherever possible, routine medical and dental appointments should be arranged outside school hours. If this is not possible, please inform the school in advance and provide an appointment card or letter.
- Parents have a legal duty to ensure their child receives a full-time education. We ask parents to work with us so pupils can attend regularly and punctually.

How we track attendance

- Registers are completed at the start of each morning session and again in the afternoon.
- We monitor attendance at whole-school, cohort and individual pupil level. Patterns of absence are reviewed regularly (at least fortnightly) so we can act quickly if attendance is falling.
- Persistent absence is currently defined as attendance below 90% and severe absence as below 50%. Where these thresholds are reached, we will increase our support and, if necessary, contact parents and carers to discuss the reasons for absence, agree an Attendance Support Plan with clear actions, timescales and review dates.
- Attendance for a pupil of between 90% and 95% can still mean a significant amount of missed learning. Across a typical 190-day school year, this equates to around 10 to 19 days off school — roughly two to four weeks.

How you should report an absence

- Please contact school by 8.30am via Arbor, phone call or email on the first day of absence and each subsequent day unless you have already given an estimated return date. Leave a clear message with your child's name, class and reason for absence.
- If we have not heard from you, we will contact you by text or phone on the first day of absence to check everyone is safe and to understand the reason for the absence.

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Headteacher: Mrs Lorraine Hadley

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What we will do to support families

- At the first sign of irregular attendance we will contact you to listen and to understand any barriers.
- We will offer practical and personalised support where appropriate. This may include short-term adjustments to the school day, support in school, access to pastoral services, liaison with health professionals, or referrals to local early help services. For pupils with SEND we will consider reasonable adjustments and specialist advice to make school more accessible.
- Where attendance does not improve, we will hold formal meetings to agree a plan of support and actions.

When absence may be unauthorised

- Absences without good reason will be recorded as unauthorised. Examples include term-time family holidays (except in exceptional circumstances), birthdays and other special days, unexplained absence where no contact is made and other routine appointments that could easily be arranged outside school hours.

Attendance and our school values

- We want school to be a place pupils want to attend. Alongside tracking attendance, we will continue to develop classroom practice, behaviour routines and pastoral support that help pupils feel safe, included and ready to learn. Your support at home — encouraging regular routines and communicating with us early when problems arise — makes a real difference.

Current Context

- There has been a noticeable increase in the number of family holidays taken during term time in this first part of the academic year. Our records show that the rate of term-time holiday absence has doubled compared with the first half of the autumn term last year (autumn 2025), and the level of absence at whole school level for family holidays during term time is currently in line with the level of absence caused due to illness. This level of absence has a real impact on pupils' learning, readiness for lessons, and it makes it harder for teachers to sustain progress for the whole class. Requests for term-time leave will continue to be considered on an individual basis and only granted in exceptional circumstances, in line with our attendance policy and statutory guidance.

If you are worried about your child's attendance or need help to get them into school, please contact the school office or ask to speak to a member of staff. We will listen, and we will do our best to find a solution together.

Mr Stone
Deputy Headteacher
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