

Attendance Factsheet

Blackminster School



Policy Author:	Matt Sandell
Date:	Feb 2024
Review date:	September 2024

Key Contacts

School Attendance Lead Name: Matt Sandell

School Attendance Officer Name: June Canning

Pastoral Support Lead/Senior Mental Health Lead: Miss Lewis

SENDco: Miss M Lewis

DSL (Federation level): Ms L McQuone and Mr M Sandell

DSL: Mrs T Johnson

DSL: Fiona Bolton

DSL: Morganna Lewis

Governor for attendance: Mr P Jones

Contact details:

Blackminster Middle School - 01386 830311 - office@blackminster.worcs.sch.uk



At Blackminster Middle School, we want all students to aim for 100% attendance. We set expectations of excellent attendance for all pupils and expect pupils to be in school every day that school is open unless they are too unwell to attend. This is really important so we can give your children the best education we can, and the education that they are entitled to.

Some pupils find it harder than others to attend school and we will work together with parents/carers, pupils, and any relevant partners to remove any barriers getting in the way of pupils attending regularly. Pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance will be fully supported by our school, in partnership, where necessary, with any health or external professionals. Promoting and supporting excellent attendance is everybody's business within our school and community.

By providing a calm, orderly, safe, and supportive school where all pupils want to be is important to us. We will work together with you as parents to explore and support any child who is finding it difficult to attend school regularly.

Why is Attending School Regularly So Important?

Excellent attendance is important for pupils to feel part of the school community and develop a sense of belonging. This supports each pupil's all-round development, mental health, and well-being.

If	If attendance over the school year is:	...a pupil will miss this many days:	...and this many lessons:
	100%	0	0
	95%	10	50
	90%	19	95
	85%	29	145
	80%	39	195
	75%	49	245
	70%	58	290

your child is unable to attend school, please contact the school office on 01386 830311 and speak to Mrs Canning or another member of staff. If no one is available to take your call, please leave a message on the office answer machine.

If we are not informed of a pupil absence, we will attempt to make contact via phone, email. If we are unable to make contact over a prolonged period of time, external agencies will be notified with advice sought and their involvement encouraged, including a referral to the Local Authority. This will only be a 'last case' scenario and if all other attempts have failed.

Lateness

It is also important to arrive at school on time. If a child arrives late to school every day, their learning begins to suffer. Below is a graph showing how being late to school every day over a school year adds up to lost learning time over one academic year.



Absence Requests

The law does not grant parents the automatic right to take a child out of school during term time for any reason, including a holiday.

Only in very, very exceptional circumstances will absence requests be authorised.

Absence forms can be obtained from the school office and then returned at your earliest convenience for consideration. Absence requests will only be approved and granted for extenuating personal circumstances e.g. family bereavement, relocating etc. Attendance data and information, including those pupils absent, is regularly reported to the Local Authority with any required next steps and action taken if deemed necessary.

Unauthorised Absence

An absence will be unauthorised if your child is absent from school without the permission of the school. Whilst as parents you can provide explanations for absence, it remains the school's decision whether to authorise an absence or not.

Unauthorised absences may include:

- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Pupils who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Absences for shopping, birthdays, day trips, errands
- Absences whereby parents are stating they are waiting at home e.g. for a washing machine to be mended, or a parcel to be delivered
- Long weekends and holidays in term time (unless in very, very exceptional circumstances as agreed in advance by the school)
- If a pupil is kept away from school longer than has been agreed - any additional absence will be unauthorised

Unauthorised absences may result in the use of penalty notices or prosecution.

Support for School Attendance

Sometimes your child may not want to attend school. We encourage parents and pupils to be open and honest with us about the reasons for absence. If your child does not want to attend school, it is never better to cover up their absence or give in to pressure to let your child stay at home. This can give the impression to your child that attendance does not matter and can make things worse. As a school, we need to understand the reasons why your child may not want to attend school so we can support you and your child in the best way possible.

In these circumstances, please reach out to the Mr Sandell, or your child's class teacher so we can obtain as much information as possible and support you as a family moving forward in the best way possible.

For pupils with medical conditions or other circumstances that may at times prevent regular attendance we will fully support each pupil to be able to attend as much as possible. Our school will use an individual health plan and will work alongside other relevant professionals such as health colleagues, and yourselves, to best support this.

If our school is unable to work in partnership with you as parents, we may refer to the Local Authority. We will only ever do this if everything else has failed. We hope as parents you will work with us to best support your child so this does not need to happen.

If our school has any **safeguarding concerns** about a pupil who is absent, we will share information with other agencies as we deem necessary to ensure a child's safety and well-being.

