

# Banks Lane Infant and Nursery School



## Attendance Policy 2026

Approved: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Review: February 2027

## **Introduction**

At Banks lane Infant & Nursery School we believe that all children and young people have a right to an education as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and in UK Law. The opportunities provided by education are fundamental to enabling all children and young people to reach their potential and lead happy and rewarding lives.

Evidence shows that there are clear links between good attendance and high achievement in school. Regular school attendance is essential to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people.

The definition of regular attendance in law is that children and young people attend school each and every day that they are expected to attend.

At Banks lane Infant & Nursery School we will work with parents, carers and children to ensure that children engage in education and maximise their full potential. We believe that children who attend school regularly are more likely to feel settled in school, maintain friendships, keep up with their learning and gain the greatest benefit from their education. We want all our pupils to enjoy school, grow up to become emotionally resilient, confident and competent adults who are able to realise their potential.

At Banks lane Infant & Nursery School we recognise that there may be exceptional circumstances when children and young people may be unable to attend school. Absence may be agreed in line with national code guidance. Absence from school will be looked into taking into account the specific needs and circumstances of the children and young people concerned.

This policy outlines our approach to attendance and summarises the legal duties and expectations of the whole school community. It reflects the key principles of the Department for Education's attendance guidance for maintained schools, academies, independent schools, and local authorities: [Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) , [Summary Table of Responsibilities for School Attendance](#) and locally agreed processes.

## **What does the law say about school attendance?**

### **Parents Legal Duties**

Parents are responsible for making sure that their children of compulsory school age receive a suitable full-time education. Children are of compulsory school age from the beginning of the term following their 5th birthday until the last Friday in June in the school year in which they reach the age of 16.

Under section 576 of the Education Act 1996 (EA 1996), the definition of parent includes natural parents or other people with legal parental responsibility (whether or not they live with the child), and anyone who has care of the child.

For children receiving full time education at a school, parents must ensure that attendance is regular and punctual.

If a child of compulsory school age fails to attend regularly at the school at which they have been registered the parents may be guilty of an offence, and can be prosecuted by the Local Authority.

## **Schools Legal Duties**

Banks Lane Infant & Nursery School is required to:

- Carry out all their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils at the school.
- Promote good attendance and identify patterns of poor attendance at an early stage
- Maintain and preserve accurate attendance registers as required under regulations 10 within the. School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 and make them available for inspection by the local authority.
- Monitor pupils educated Off-Site and ensuring that the school register mirrors the attendance information held by the off-site provision.
- Have clear procedures for the closure of registers during each session.
- Comply with legal requirements regarding adding or removing pupils' names to or from the school roll including ensuring that: Pupils' names are added to the school roll on the expected date of attendance. Pupils' names are removed from roll only when one of the legal grounds in the Education (Pupil Registration) England Regulations 2006 is satisfied. All removals from roll are reported to the Local Authority.
- Information is shared and enquiries made jointly with the Local Authority in order to locate missing pupils.
- Report pupils who fail to attend regularly to the Local Authority. This includes both authorised and unauthorised absences. In the case of pupils on part-time timetables, the Local Authority also requires a part-time timetable Notification Form to be completed.
- Report Missing Pupils (pupils who are continuously absent for 10 days or more without reasonable explanation) to the Local Authority. See below.

## **Legal Sanctions**

- Regular school attendance is a legal duty on parents and carers. If a parent fails to ensure their child attends school regularly, they are guilty of an offence under section 444(1) or (1A) of the Education Act 1996.
- A parent who commits this offence may be liable to prosecution in the Magistrates' Court and, depending on which offence they are convicted of, may be liable to a fine of up to £2500 or a term of imprisonment of up to three months.
- Although school will offer support in addressing attendance issues, it will also refer pupils whose attendance fails to improve due to non-engagement of the parent, or who take leave of absence from school without agreement, to the Education Welfare Service within Stockport Council. This can take several routes:

### **Education Penalty Notice:**

Education Penalty Notices are fixed penalty notices issued by Stockport Council. The amount of the fine depends on whether any previous Education Penalty Notices have been issued to the parent for the same child for unauthorised absences which took place after 19/08/2024 but within a period of three years from the current fine. For the first such Education Penalty Notice, the fine is £80 if paid within 21 days or £160 if paid between 22 and 28 days. For the second such Education Penalty Notice,

the fine is at a single rate of £160 payable within 28 days. If third or subsequent offences occur within a rolling three year period which would otherwise result in a fine, the Local Authority is not allowed to issue a further fine, and instead the parent is likely to be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

#### **Education Penalty Notices for Irregular Attendance**

- Before being issued with an Education Penalty Notice, parents will receive a written warning from Stockport Council. This gives them an opportunity to avoid a fine by ensuring that no unauthorised absences – including late after the close registration marks – are recorded against their child during the next 15 school days. The minimum criteria for sending such a warning is - 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 10 week period.

#### **Education Penalty Notices for unauthorised leave of absence**

- Education Penalty Notices may also be issued where a pupil is taken out of school for five days or more without the school's consent – such as for a term time holiday. In these cases, the fine is sent by the Council without an initial warning being issued.

#### **Attendance Contracts**

- A Parent Contract is an agreement which usually involves the school, parents, members of Stockport Council's Education Welfare Service and, in some cases, the pupil. The agreement sets out the actions required by all parties to overcome the barriers to improved attendance. Compliance with the contract and the progress of improving attendance are reviewed regularly at Parent Contract Review Meetings. If a parent fails to participate and/or fails to ensure that attendance improves, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court.

#### **Education Supervision Order**

- An Education Supervision Order (ESO) is an order granted in the Family Proceedings Court requiring a parent and child to follow directions made in the Order and work alongside a Supervising Officer to improve the child's school attendance. The Supervising Officer will be put in place by Stockport Council and may be a Social Worker, Education Welfare Officer or other Family Help professional. Where parents persistently fail to comply with the directions given under an ESO, they may be prosecuted in the Magistrates' Court. ESOs usually last for a year, but can be extended to up to three years.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Banks Lane Infant & Nursery School believes that improved school attendance can only be achieved if it is viewed as a shared responsibility of the school staff, governors, parents, pupils and the wider school community.

At Banks Lane Infant School we know that **attendance is everyone's business**. We recognise that the foundation of securing good attendance is to develop good patterns of attendance and ensuring that it is an integral part of the school ethos and culture. We will work with pupils and parents to remove any barriers by building strong and trusting relationships and work together to put the right support in place.

As a **school**, we will:

- Have a named senior leader with the responsibility for Attendance
- Make sure attendance support and improvement is appropriately resourced including the effective use of Pupil Premium funding
- Make improving attendance integral to our wider school improvement efforts, recognising how it connects with the quality of the school's curriculum, behaviour, safeguarding, and our approach to inclusion, well-being and support for disadvantaged pupils.
- Have a school strategy for reducing persistent and severe absence, including access to wider support services and when support will be formalised work in conjunction with the local authority.
- Promote the importance of good attendance and set high expectations for every pupil's attendance and punctuality at school.
- Communicate these expectations clearly, strongly and consistently to parents and to pupils.
- Record attendance accurately and follow up absences with parents in a timely manner.
- Make sure staff have a good understanding of attendance-related matters and attendance support is appropriately resourced.
- Listen carefully to parents about the reasons why children are not attending regularly.
- Support parents to understand what is expected of them and work together to identify and understand the barriers to attendance.
- Offer support and make reasonable adjustments where needed to overcome barriers to attendance under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Where appropriate, work with a range of services and alternative provisions when additional support is needed.
- Work closely with support services and agencies where pupils and families need additional support.
- Analyse attendance information to identify patterns and trends, and use this analysis to target our actions for individual pupils, groups of pupils and at a whole-school level.
- Regularly review our attendance-related messaging, processes and strategies with a view to continued whole-school improvement.
- Proactively manage lateness and first day calling to ensure each reason for not being in school and on time is challenged and supported appropriately.
- Carry out home visits for children who are struggling to attend to ensure that children maintain their sense of belonging to school – this could be someone from the pastoral team, senior leader or someone the child is familiar with. These checks are also important to ensure the school has 'eyes on the child' and don't have any safeguarding concerns. During these visits the communication between school and home will aim to be curious about reasons for absence and look at ways to improve attendance and support the child in attending.
- Work with the Stockport Council on legal intervention if support is not successful or not engaged with.

- The designated senior leader with overall responsibility for championing and improving attendance at Banks Lane Infant School is Mrs Laura Wilkinson – Pastoral Manager

As such the **governing body** will;

- Ensure regular ongoing support for the child or parent, guidance, and challenge in relation to attendance, recognising the importance of good attendance and promoting it across the school's ethos and policies.
- Ensure that there is a named senior leader responsible for the strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Ensure that the school's leadership team fulfil their expectations and the relevant statutory duties as set out in attendance related legislation and guidance.
- Regularly review attendance data, discuss and challenge trends with vulnerable groups or year groups, and help the school leadership team focus improvement efforts on the individual pupils or groups of pupils who need it most.
- Ensure school staff receive adequate training on attendance.

### **Parents**

The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education suitable to their age, aptitude, and any special educational need they may have. It is the legal responsibility of every parent to make sure their child receives that education either by attendance at a school or by education otherwise than at a school.

Where parents decide to have their child registered at school, they have an additional legal duty to ensure their child attends that school regularly. This means their child must attend every day that the school is open, except in a small number of allowable circumstances such as being too ill to attend or being given permission for an absence in advance from the school.

Parents are expected to support the school to improve and maintain high standards of attendance by:

- Ensuring their child attends regularly as required by law.
- Ensuring the school has up to date contact information including home address, telephone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts. Where reasonably possible there should be more than one emergency contact number (proposed KCSiE 2024 pt 101).
- Ensuring that, in the event of a house move, the school has been informed about the new address and possible school details at the earliest opportunities and no later than the last day they attend.
- Supporting the school's absence procedures:
- Telephoning school every day that their child is unable to attend school due to illness (except where a doctor's report has already been provided indicating an expected return date).
- Providing medical or other evidence in relation to absence if required by the school.
- Arranging medical or dental appointments to take place outside school hours wherever possible.
- Not taking family holidays in term time or any leave of absence for any reason without prior agreement.
- Requesting leave of absence only in exceptional circumstances and in advance.

- Raising any issues or concerns affecting attendance with school staff at the earliest opportunity.
- Attending raising attendance meetings with school staff to discuss concerns and plan support, if requested by the school.
- Working in partnership with school and other agencies to address any attendance problems.
- Encouraging good routines at home to ensure children are prepared for school each day.

### **Absence Procedures**

All absences must be recorded in the school register, and categorised as either authorised or unauthorised.

First day absence contact with parents by telephone/text – the pastoral manager will attempt to make immediate contact with parents whenever a child is absent without explanation. In the event school is unsuccessful in speaking with parent/carer(s) voicemail messages will be left requesting contact is made to school regarding the reason for the absence. If there is no option to leave a mobile voicemail a T2P (text to parent) will be sent via the school Admin Manager. If no contact is made to school re; the ongoing absence by day 2 then the parent/carer(s) will be contacted again with phone calls/T2P. Within our duty of safeguarding each pupil's whereabouts, if we still have no contact from the parent/carer(s) then contact is made with the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> contact on the SIMS database as an attempt to determine the reason for the child's absence from school. If there are safeguarding concerns/the child and family is perceived as vulnerable (LAC/CP/TAC/TAF) and contact cannot be made with contacts 1 & 2 on day 1 then contact will be made to the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> contacts at that time.

- If we are unable to contact parents/guardians and emergency contacts we may arrange home visits where necessary.
- Should we have immediate concerns for the welfare of a child not attending school we will make a safeguarding referral to the local authority.
- Attendance & punctuality letters – Banks lane Infant & Nursery School will notify parents in writing if there are attendance concerns and offer support.
- Meetings in school – school will invite parents to meetings in school at an early stage to discuss attendance concerns.
- Meetings between the Pastoral Manager and Education Welfare Office, Lorraine Goulson take place each half term to discuss & review those pupils with attendance of 90% or less. Vulnerable pupils such as Looked After Children (LAC), those in Child Protection or safeguarding processes will also be monitored & discussed at this time.
- Team Around the School – After appropriate action by school and where internal interventions have not been successful, pupils and families requiring further support

around attendance will be referred to the Team Around the School (TAS). The TAS includes representatives from services working with children and families in Stockport so that appropriate support can be allocated.

- Early Help Assessments – school will use Early Help Assessments to support families in identifying barriers to good attendance and attainment and put in place plans to overcome them. Completion of an EHA may result in a TAF (Team Around the Family) meeting inviting other appropriate services to meet with school & parents/carers to explore what support can be offered/implemented.

### **Authorised absence from school**

Only the Head teacher can authorise absence from school. Authorised absence is an absence agreed by the school.

Examples of authorised absence can be seen below:

#### **Illness**

Parents are asked to contact school on every day that their child is unable to attend school, except where information from a health professional has been provided indicating an expected return date.

Where a child or young person has frequent absence due to illness, parent/carers will be asked to attend a meeting in school to put together a medical action plan.

Where pupils are likely to miss more than 15 days of school, they may be entitled to educational provision from the Education of Sick Children Service, and it is the school's responsibility to ensure that a referral is made in appropriate cases.

Banks lane Infant & Nursery School will work in partnership with parents and health professionals to identify and refer pupils entitled to such provision in line with the Education for Sick Children Policy.

#### **Medical/Dental appointments**

Parents are requested wherever possible to make routine medical or dental appointments outside of the school day. However, we understand that hospital appointments and specialist clinic appointments often occur in the school day. The pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

#### **Other examples of authorised circumstances include:**

Part-time timetables may be agreed in exceptional cases, for example where medical issues prevent a pupil from attending full time or as part of a re-integration package. This should only ever be used as a temporary arrangement and must be regularly reviewed.

Where a pupil is absent from school due to suspension or permanent exclusion.

Absence to take part in any day set aside exclusively for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong, including religious festivals.

When traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending another school. In order to fulfil legal requirements, in such cases, pupils must attend school for at least 200 sessions in every 12 months.

### **Leave of absence**

Leave of absence may only be granted in exceptional circumstances

Parents must complete an electronic 'Leave of Absence Request form' available on the school website in advance to the Head teacher. If the absence is not authorised by the head teacher and parents remove their child from school the school may request that the Local Authority issues an Education Penalty Notice (EPN).

### **Late Arrival at School**

The school days starts at 09:00am. The morning registers are marked by 09:05am. A pupil arriving after this time will be marked as present but arriving late (L code). The register will close at 09:30am; pupils arriving after the close of register will be marked as late with the U code, this counts as an unauthorised absence for the session. This will not be authorised and will count as an absence for that school session.

### **Unauthorised Absences from School**

Unauthorised absences are absences from school for which the school has not given permission, including arriving late at school after the registers have closed. Absence will not be authorised unless parents have provided a satisfactory explanation that has been accepted by the school.

### **Missing from school**

BLINS will report a child as missing from school when they have had 10 consecutive days of unauthorised absence using this on-line form [Missing from school report form](#)

The report form will be triaged by an Education Welfare Officer and contact made with parents to establish why the pupil has not been attending school. Home visits and welfare checks will be carried out where contact cannot be made with parents. The outcome of the missing from school referral will be communicated to BLINS.

Banks Lane Infant & Nursery School will take the following steps when attempting to follow up consecutive unexplained and unauthorised absences before reporting a child as missing from school:

1. Attempt to make contact with parents, trying at different times of the day and using all available contact details where necessary. If no response is received, consider using emergency contact information and request that they ask the parent to contact school.
2. If there is an allocated social worker, School Age Plus worker, or other lead professional involved, contact them and ask that they communicate with parents

and update the school. **Please note that it is still necessary to report a child missing from school, even when the absences have been discussed with a lead professional.**

3. If the school have specific concerns suggesting a child may be at risk of harm or abuse, they should contact the Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub (MASSH) immediately - **(0161) 217-6028 or 6024, out of hours (0161) 718-2118.**
4. If there are immediate safety or welfare concerns, contact the Police via 999. Non-urgent concerns which you feel warrant Police involvement should be raised via 101. Further guidance on when to call the Police can be found here: [NPCC -When to call the police-guidance for schools and colleges.pdf](#)

### **Understanding Barriers to Attendance**

At Banks Lane infant School we recognise that poor attendance is often a sign of wider difficulties in a child's life whether at home or at school. Parents should make school aware of any difficulties or changes in circumstances that may affect their child's attendance or behaviour at school. This may include bereavement, divorce/separation, or other family difficulties; friendship issues; concerns relating to special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), medical needs or mental health/anxiety. This will help the school identify any additional support that may be required.

Additionally, we recognise that some pupils face greater barriers to attendance than their peers and are more likely to require additional support to attain good attendance, for example, pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with physical or mental health needs, young carers and children with Social Workers. We still maintain high expectations of attendance, but we will be mindful of the way in which additional barriers may affect attendance. Reasonable adjustments will be made and additional support from other services sought where appropriate.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) – the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDSCO) will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made where appropriate to support good attendance and that attendance issues are addressed in all assessment and review processes.

Pupils with a Social Worker – we will notify the Social Worker of any unauthorised absences and concerns about attendance/punctuality, and will support them in addressing attendance issues as part of the child or family plan.

Children in our Care – the designated teacher will ensure that attendance issues are addressed in Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and in regular looked after review meetings. The Social Worker will be notified of any unauthorised absences and we will contact the relevant Virtual School Headteacher for more support where necessary.

### **Attendance Intervention Staged Process**

Banks Lane Infant School uses a range of methods to identify pupils whose attendance is causing concern including:

- Regular analysis of whole school and group attendance data by attendance staff, the leadership team and governing body, including vulnerable pupils and pupils with SEND (this data will be anonymised)
- Regular attendance monitoring meetings between the school's attendance officer and relevant teachers/pastoral staff/SENDSCO.
- Termly meetings with the local authority's Education Welfare Service to discuss cases where persistent absence is a concern.

We use Stockport Council's **Attendance Intervention Staged Process** as a framework for our work with individual pupils with low attendance. We recognise that, in most cases, improvement in attendance can be brought about by good communication and strong partnership working between parents, pupils and the school, identifying and addressing the barriers to attendance.

Offering early help and involving early help services is also an integral part of the staged process in cases where more support is needed to help improve attendance.

### **Children Missing Education (CME)**

Children missing education (CME) are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training) later in life.

Local authorities have a legal duty to make arrangements to establish the identities of children in their area who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise.

Effective information sharing between parents, schools and local authorities is critical to ensuring that all children of compulsory school age are safe and receiving suitable education.

Local authorities are required to have a named person to whom schools and other agencies can make referrals about children. In Stockport, the named CME Officer is:

Lorraine Goulson, Education Welfare Officer –Tel: 07800 617978

If a school becomes aware of any pupil that may not currently be on a school roll, for example if a parent approaches a school directly regarding admission and has not applied for a school place through the local authority, please notify the CME Officer (details above) or via [eas@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:eas@stockport.gov.uk)

### Relevant contacts

Children Missing Education (CME) Officer – 07800 617978, [lorraine.goulson@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:lorraine.goulson@stockport.gov.uk)  
Education Access team - 0161 474 3805, [eas@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:eas@stockport.gov.uk)

Schools can also contact their Education Welfare Officer.

Other relevant information

Schools should also familiarise themselves with the DfE statutory guidance on Children Missing Education (CME), which sets out schools and local authority's duties in this area: [DfE Guidance on Children Missing Education](#)

### **Recording Of Absences**

All absences must be recorded in the school register and categorised as either authorised or unauthorised.

<b>Present Codes</b>		
/ \	present during registration	
B	educated off site and taster days and do not fit K, V, P or W codes	Mandatory explanation needs to be recorded
K	attending provision arranged by the local authority	Mandatory explanation needs to be recorded
L	arrived after the register has started but before it has closed	
P	sporting activity with prior agreement from school	
V	educational visit or trip	
W	work experience	
<b>Absent Codes</b>		
<b>Authorised Absences</b>		
C	exceptional circumstances	
C1	in a regulated performance/undertaking regulated employment abroad	
C2	absent due to part-time timetable	
D	dual registered	
E	suspended or permanently excluded	
I	illness (not medical or dental appointments)	
J1	job/school/college interview	
M	medical or dental appointment	
Q	unable to attend because of a lack of access arrangements	
R	religious observance (only 1 day allowed, any more coded as C if agreed)	
S	study leave	
T	parent travelling for occupational purposes	
X	non-compulsory school age pupil not required to attend school	
Y1	unable to attend due to transport provided not being available	
Y2	unable to attend due to widespread transport disruption	
Y3	unable to attend due to part of the school premises being closed	
Y4	unable to attend due to whole school closure	

Y5	unable to attend as pupil is in criminal justice detention	
Y6	unable to attend in accordance with public health guidance or law	
Y7	unable to attend due to other avoidable cause (must affect the pupil NOT the parent)	Mandatory explanation needs to be recorded
<b>Unauthorised Absence</b>		
G	holiday (not agreed)	
N	reason for absence not yet established (must be corrected within 5 days)	
O	absent in other or unknown circumstances	
U	late after register has closed	
Z	pupil not yet on register	
#	planned whole school closure (eg holidays, insets and polling station days)	