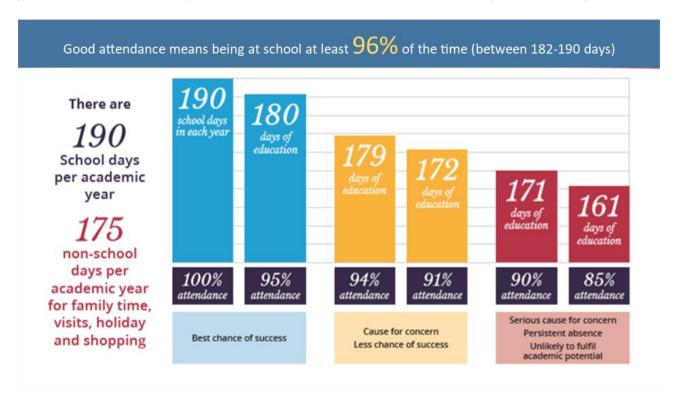




26.9.22

Dear Parents and Carers.

During the forthcoming academic year, the regular attendance of pupils will continue to be a priority focus for the school. We encourage all students to maintain excellent attendance with 96% considered a good level. Attendance falling below 95% will begin to cause concern in relation to the impact on learning and progress with 90% constituting up to three weeks off school over an academic year or 75 hours of learning time missed. Please see our Good Attendance guide in the diagram below.



IMPORTANT! REPORTING DAILY ABSENCE

We understand that there may be times during the year when children are absent from school. For example, when they are too unwell to attend school. Each day of absence must be called into the school office by 9:30am in the morning. This enables us to establish quickly why a child is not in school and prevents us from raising safeguarding concerns or wasting time making unnecessary phone calls. Absence should be called into school on a daily basis unless we know the specific reason why a child will be off for more than one day.

Parents/carers can ring the office on 01364 643304, email on admin@buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk or use Class Dojo to message Kirsty in the school office. Thank you for your help with this.

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Bossell Road, Buckfastleigh, TQ11 0DD

01364 643304



admin@buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk



https://www.buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk/

WHAT WE DO WHEN ABSENCE INCREASES

The school attendance team will be monitoring attendance on a regular basis. When a child's attendance drops below a certain level, you could receive a letter from the school highlighting our concerns. The process we follow is shown in the table below.



ATTENDANCE ESCALATION PROCESS

WESTCOUNTRY

Buckfastleigh Primary School



- Class teacher welcomes the child back into school on the day they return after absence.
- Class teacher may check in with parents/carers about any worries or concerns they have if absences continue
- . School attendance officer contact with parent/carer if there are regular weeks with intermittent absence



- 12 sessions of school missed (6 days) initial medical letter (1) is sent out and Early Help will be offered.
- 20 sessions of school missed (10 days) medical evidence letter (2) is sent out explaining that all absences will be recorded as
 unauthorized unless medical evidence is provided.
- 6 absences since the medical evidence letter sent letter (3) sent asking the parent/carer to attend a meeting at school.
- If the parent/carer does not attend the meeting and absence is unauthorised, a further letter (4) is sent advising that the
 school will be referring to the Education Welfare Service if there are any further unauthorised absences.
- 10 unauthorised absences—referral to the Education Welfare Service to consider legal proceedings.



- 6 unauthorised absences a letter (5) is sent out reminding parents/carers of their duties to ensure their child is attending school and on time and to phone in every day if their child is absent. This includes explanation that a U code in the register is an unauthorised mark if their child has arrived at school after registers close at 9:05am. Early Help is offered.
- If there are further unauthorised absences following letter (5) being sent, the parent/carer will be sent letter (6) inviting them to a meeting to discuss absences.
- 10 unauthorised absences or more will result in the case being referred to the Education Welfare Service to consider legal proceedings.

PUNCTUALITY

It is important that all pupils arrive at school punctually so that the day can start well and registration is completed quickly. The start of the day is a very important time for the children as it gives them an opportunity to catch up with friends, reflect on feedback from their teacher about their learning and check in with adults. Regularly not being ready for the first lesson of the day can have a negative impact on a child's progress and peer group relationships.

We aim to open the gates at 8:35am and registration begins at 8:45am. Our school gates close at 8:50am and any children arriving after this time will be marked as late. Any children arriving at school after 9:05am when registration closes will be marked as a U code, which is an unauthorised absence.

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REWARDS FOR ATTENDANCE

Children will be rewarded for good attendance each half term with 98% and above attendance (that half term) meaning a certificate in assembly and 10 Class Dojo points. Any children who have 98% and above at the end of the year will receive a special prize.

ABSENCE REQUESTS

Unfortunately, we are only able to authorise exceptional circumstances for absence requests. This is a legal requirement for all schools. We are unable to authorise any requests for holiday during term time. If absence is taken without authorisation by the school, this will lead to further action by the Education Welfare Service and could incur a fine (please see the end of this letter for further information and guidance around unauthorised absences). We would therefore encourage you to communicate closely with us if you do need to apply for an exceptional absence. Request forms for exceptional absence can be collected from the school office or found on the Devon County Council website (click on the link below):

https://devoncc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/PublicDocs/Education/EXNZxVGkTXhMvCkRh1cdNpIBGHRE0I4 ThMQCxfkY718b5g?rtime=EwSQnsNv2kg

S2 forms should be submitted at least three weeks in advance of the absence request period to guarantee it is processed in time. If you send an email request for exceptional absence, we will not process this unless you have filled in the Devon S2 Absence Request Form. Completed electronic S2 forms should be emailed to admin@buckfastleigh.devon.sch.uk

We would like to thank all parents and carers for your continued support and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at school.

Kind regards

Eddie Brown Headteacher

Belong

Guidance around Unauthorised Absence (taken from the S2 Devon County Council Absence Request Form).

Creative

Parents should ensure that they know whether the absence will be authorised or not before they go away as an unauthorised absence will likely result in a penalty notice or court summons being issued to each parent for each pupil affected. It is therefore recommended that this completed form is sent into the school at least three school weeks before the intended absence. If this request is unauthorised by the school, a penalty notice may be issued by Devon County Council. A penalty notice offers a parent the opportunity of dealing with a potential offence without going to court, by paying a penalty. If parents can't afford to pay, or for any other reason do not take the offer of paying the notice within a set time, then the case will proceed to a magistrates court. The provision of penalty notices is set by Regulations and the amount of the penalty, timeframe for payment or payment method are not able to be varied by Devon County Council.

Parents should note that only one penalty notice per parent per child will normally be issued within a two-year period. Any second 'offence' within a two year period will be referred straight to court.

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