



## Attendance and Lateness Policy

Version	Reviewed by	Reasons for	Date
2.0	Kate Vincent and Annie Smith	Update with changes to DFE policy and Working Together to improve attendance	January 2024

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# Attendance and Lateness Policy

## Banister Attendance Team:

Strategic Lead for Attendance	Miss Vincent / Miss Heller
Attendance Officer	Miss Singh
Safeguarding Leaders	Miss Vincent, Miss Heller, Mrs Price, Mr Stott
Educational Welfare Officer for Banister	Samantha Dabreo
Strategic lead for Attendance Southampton City Council	Kerica Hunt

## Statement of intent

Banister is committed to the continuous raising of achievements of all our children. We recognise and promote excellent attendance. We strive to ensure that all our children receive the best education we can provide which enables them to maximise opportunities to reach their full potential. Regular school attendance is recognised as key to children reaching their potential within school and their future life opportunities. Children who attend school make better progress socially and academically increasing their positive experience of learning and a more successful transition from primary to secondary and beyond.

## Legal Framework in which we work:

In accordance with 'Working together to improve attendance' the Government state that;

- Parents are responsible for ensuring that children attend school on time each day.
- It is the responsibility of the school to support attendance and be proactive in supporting families where non-attendance is occurring.

Legislation, guidance and policies linked to this include;

[Working together to improve attendance \(DFE Sept 22\)](#)

[Keeping safe in Education \(DFE Sept 22\)](#)

[Education inspection framework \(Ofsted 22\)](#)

[Banister Safeguarding Policy](#)

[Equality](#)

[SEND Policy](#)

## Banister's commitment to you and your child:

Banister Primary aims to work in partnership with parents / carers and other agencies to strive towards every child reaching at least 96% attendance to ensure that each and every one of our children can get the best educational opportunities we can provide.

### Why is regular attendance important?

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education, it is vital that they attend school and are on time every day, unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Children with high attendance are far more likely to achieve excellent progress and outcomes compared to their peers.

Good school attendance habits are always best started early; children learn from those around them and you as parents / carers set the standards and expectations for your child, their educational journey and future life.

### Promoting regular attendance at Banister

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, carers, children and staff.

Banister school will:

- Build positive relationships between home and school that can be the foundation of good attendance and punctuality.
- Give parents/ carers details on attendance and punctuality in half- termly and termly attendance updates for each child.
- Celebrate through Marvellous Me and Tapestry class attendance
- Whole school attendance update each half term
- Celebrate good attendance and punctuality, through assemblies giving rewards each week those who have achieved 100%
- Celebrate attendance and punctuality termly through certificates and rewards for 100% attendance
- Reward good or improving attendance and punctuality through certificates, stickers and rewards.
- Contacting parents to share successes of improving attendance and punctuality.

### Banister Primary Expectations of Attendance:

**We expect every child to have a yearly attendance of over 96%.** There are 190 days in a school year, and so this means we expect children to miss less than 9 days per year due to illness or unforeseen circumstances. Nationally, the expectation is for all children in education; irrelevant of their year group to achieve at least 96%. Banister Primary strives to meet and exceed this.

Our ethos and culture at Banister is always to ensure that each and every child is welcomed, feels that they belong, valued, safe, have their needs met in order for them to thrive. In order to achieve this, we recognise and value the partnership with our parents and carers whose attitudes have a direct influence on their child's attendance, educational and life outcomes. As a result, we always seek to work with our families to seek to understand circumstances that may be playing a part in them not being able to get their children to school. We will always help families, where we can, to remove the barriers that are being faced to ensure that our children do not lose out. If we feel that

more support is needed beyond what we can offer, we will always engage with our partner agencies to support. This may include a referral to Children's Resource Service for Early Help support in the home.

### Banister School Day:

Our expectations are that all children are in school by at least 8:30 each day.

To support you with this, we have agreed to open our school gates at **8:15 – 8:30** each day giving our families a window of 15 mins to get their child safely and calmly into school.

School officially starts at **8:30**. All children are expected to be in the building by this time.

### Why is being on time important?

#### **Classes and teachers are ready from 8:15 to welcome children.**

As the children come into class from 8:15, the staff are able to speak with the children, sharing their exciting news, their interests or generally just catch up with their adults and friends. During this time the staff are able to provide support to anyone who may need it whether this is time to talk about their day or things that may be worrying them or support with their learning so that they are able to be ready for the new day.

#### **Learning starts at 8:30.**

By 8:30 Teachers have already begun to teach the first lesson, the class has settled and every child has been welcomed.

### What if I am late?

Our registers are closed at 8:30, meaning any arrivals past this time are coded as late. This means that your child will have to come into school through the school office.

Any child arriving at school after 8:45 is U coded, meaning they are officially absent for the whole morning.

**This means that your child's attendance will be affected by their lateness. Each U code is equivalent to half a day missed.**

If your child is late more than three times per term, we will inform you in writing. If there is no improvement after this and you have not come to talk to us about it, we will invite you to a meeting with the Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer to try to get to the root of the problem. If we still see no improvement, you may be fined or prosecuted.

If in a school year a child is late everyday by;	They would have lost approximately	Or they will have missed approximately;
5 minutes	3.5 days from school	20 lessons
10 minutes	7 days from school	41 lessons
15 minutes	10 days from school (2 full weeks of school)	55 lessons
20 minutes	14.5 days from school	82 lessons
30 minutes	22 days from school (4 weeks and 2 days of school)	123 lessons

We recognise that there are rare times when events are beyond your control preventing you from getting to school on time. In this situation;

- We expect you to please ring and let us know. If they have a school dinner, we will need to order this before 9:30 am. Otherwise, we cannot guarantee that they will get their choice of dinner.
- If there is a long-term problem that prevents you from getting to school on time, please come and talk to us about it. We will do all we can to help!

**From talking with our children**, they tell us how extremely embarrassing and anxiety inducing it is for them to walk into a class room late; feeling like everyone is looking at and watching them as they walk in. They report that they feel uncomfortable before they are even able to start their day. Being late can majorly affect their confidence and make them less excited about coming to school.

Many worry about the work they have missed and how they are going to then catch up. Others worry more and more about the missed learning and the gaps they have that they are unable to understand or keep up with their peers.

Persistent lateness can also mean that they are missing out on valuable social time with their peers and affect the friendships they have formed.

Children who are consistently late are not only disrupting their own education but that of the other children in their class.

### What to do if your child cannot attend school?

#### Types of absences

#### In the case of illness

- If your child is too ill to attend school please let the office know as soon as possible. You can let us know in person, online via the studybugs app, by phoning (including leaving a message on our absence line) or emailing the school office [info@banisterschool.co.uk](mailto:info@banisterschool.co.uk)

- We expect you to contact us **every day** your child is absent.
- If your child has vomited or has diarrhoea, they will need to wait 48 hours from the last episode before they can return to school.
- If your child has a long-term medical condition and you anticipate that they will have repeated absences due to illness or medical appointments, please come and speak to us. We will do everything we can to support you and your child.
- All absences due to illness will automatically be authorised **unless** you have more than 3 days of illness in a term, in which case we will require evidence e.g Doctors note, prescription, text from GP confirming appointment, photo of prescribed medication where date and name can be seen or the medication bottle itself with the information.

Should the absence due to illness reach over 5 days (singular or in one block) in any term and we have had no evidence provided;

**We will contact your GP to inform them as to our escalating concerns and the impact your child's health is having on their education.**

We hope that this will provide support from your GP to review the illness and any underlying symptoms.

Illness is coded as I on your child's attendance report.

#### In the case of medical appointments that cannot be made outside of school-time

- Please try to arrange all appointments to be made outside of school-time. If this is not possible, please try to minimise the time your child will miss from school. We are always happy to have your child ready to leave when you need them and for them to return to school after the appointment.
- If your child has a medical/dental related appointment please let us know the date and time as soon as possible and please provide evidence; so that we are able to authorise the absence.
- Absences due to appointments of this nature will automatically be authorised unless your child has more than 5 appointments in a school-year.
- We are unable to authorise a full day absence for a single appointment i.e. if your child has a dental appointment at 10.15am we would expect them to return to school for the afternoon session.

These will be coded as M on your attendance report



### In the case of legal appointments that cannot be made outside of school-time

- Please try to arrange all appointments to be made outside of school-time. If this is not possible, please try to minimise the time your child will miss from school. We are always happy to have your child ready to leave when you need them and for them to return to school after the appointment.
- If your child has a visa/ Embassy related appointment please let us know the date and time as soon as possible and please provide evidence; so that we are able to authorise the absence.
- We are unable to authorise a full day absence for a single appointment i.e. if your child has an appointment at 10.15am we would expect them to return to school for the afternoon session unless you are required to attend the Embassy.
- Absence request for passports will be unauthorised unless you can prove that face to face is required and that the application was made with 6 months' notice in line with passport agency guidance. Last minute applications for passport resulting in absence will be unauthorised unless there are extenuating circumstances that can be proven.

### In the case of religious holidays

- We are only authorised to award 2 days in any school year for religious holidays. Please let us know if your child will not be in school for this reason so that we can authorise their absence.

### In the case of family emergencies/weddings/funerals

- We may be able to authorise limited absence for exceptional family emergencies or event e.g 1 day for a funeral. This will depend on personal circumstances and does not usually include events abroad or that require significant travel.
- According to the guidance; if it is an activity or event that could take place outside of term time (like a wedding) then this is not authorised.
- If you expect your child to be absent for one day or more, please obtain an 'Extended Leave Form' from the office. Once you have completed the form and provided us with the necessary evidence, we will let you know whether your absence will be authorised or unauthorised.

### In all other circumstances

- If your child needs to be off school for any other reason, please speak to Miss Singh. These will be dealt with on a case to case basis.



- We **will not** authorise holidays during term time. We are aware that the price of flights and hotels may go up in the school holidays and so will try to schedule teacher-training days for the last days before the holiday so you can travel on these days instead.
- If your child has more than 5 unauthorised days off over an 8-week period, then you may be subject to a penalty notice or prosecution.

### Persistent Absence (PA):

A child becomes a persistent absentee when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for **whatever reason**.

As a school we monitor all absences and the reasons given. In any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of doing so, parents/carers will be informed by us immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully alongside academic tracking where absence affects attainment.

Parents/Carers of PA children will be asked to meet with relevant senior leaders and Attendance officer and if necessary additional support will requested from our partnership agencies. The child's attendance will be discussed with the Education Welfare Officer and further action may be taken.

### **What a child's attendance figure means as learning time lost?**

Attendance Figure	Days absent by the end of the school year	School time missed by the end of Year 11
100%	0	<b>0</b>
95%	10	<b>¼ of a year</b>
90%	20	<b>½ of a year</b>
85%	30	<b>¾ of a year</b>
80%	40	<b>a whole year</b>

### What is Educational Neglect?:

Neglect is defined as, “The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical, emotional and / or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development.”  
(Working together to safeguard in Educational settings DFE)

Educational neglect is when a parent / carer fails to provide a stimulating environment or show an interest in the child’s education at school. They may fail to respond to their special needs or not comply with the **state requirements about school attendance**.

This may include;

- Failure to identify provision for their child or adequately maintain schooling
- Failure to engage in most school / Local Authority meetings where support is offered that leads to disengagement of a child in their school and has a detrimental impact on their development
- Failure to engage as required with agencies beyond school; for example health services and educational welfare.
- Parents / Carers failure to provide substantiated reasons for absences from school
- At least one court intervention which fails to improve attendance
- Ineffective take up of support that may have improved the educational development of their child
- Previous family history of older siblings poor attendance

(Child neglect and its relationship to other forms of harm – responding effectively to children’s needs: Executive summary)

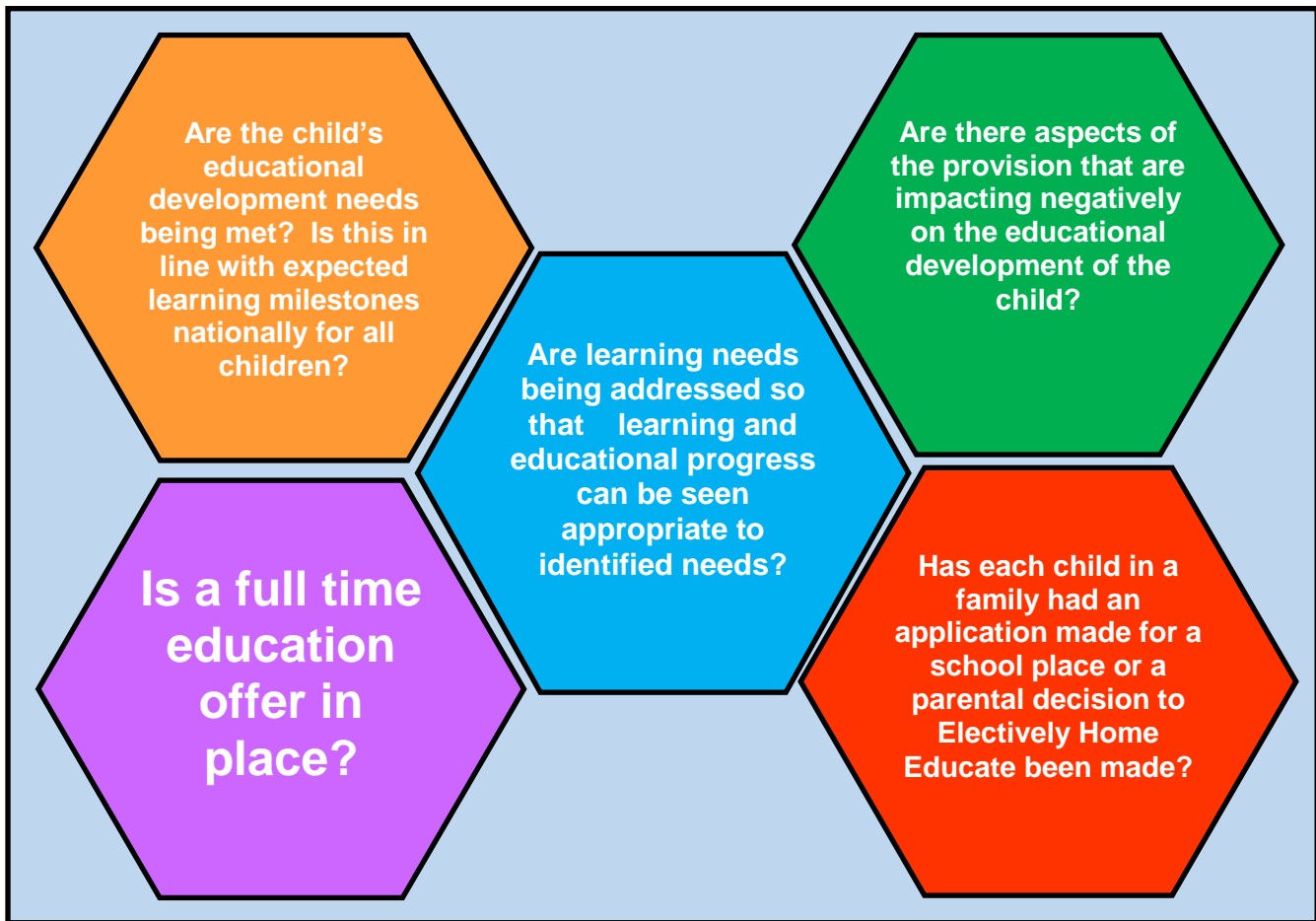
**In Southampton Abuse / Neglect covers 52% of the children who are subject to a Child Protection plan. Many of these are / have been persistent absentees.**

**Educational neglect when persistent absenteeism is not improving as a result of the support / measures put in place.**

What will Banister do with Educational Neglect?

The first thing we always do is listen. We will look at your child and their attendance against the checklist for professionals as part of Southampton’s Neglect Toolkit to understand if;

## 5 key questions to consider:



We will always seek to understand your situation and help to remove barriers that you may face. A DSL will review your child's case and complete an ACT referral using Southampton's Neglect Toolkit with you to pin point the areas of concern. This will be recorded and a plan created with you that will be monitored against the outcomes set.

Where significant improvements are not made, referral under Neglect will be made to Children's Resource Service.