Ref: KH/DA/Attendance-Concerns-and-Support

3rd November 2026

Barr Beacon School
www.barrbeaconschool.co.uk

Dear Parent/Carer,

School Attendance Concerns and Support for Families

As we begin the second half term of the academic year, I would like to take this opportunity to thank parents and carers for their continued support in ensuring that pupils attend school regularly and punctually.

I am pleased to share that **Barr Beacon School finished the first half term with an overall attendance figure of 94.9%**. This represents a strong start to the academic year and reflects the commitment of our pupils, families and staff to ensuring that attendance remains a priority.

Whilst this is a positive achievement, we must not become complacent. **Our attendance still needs to improve**. Every day of education matters, and even occasional absences can have a significant impact on a pupil's learning, progress and future opportunities. Our expectation remains that every pupil attends school every day unless there is a genuine and unavoidable reason for absence.

As outlined in previous communications, the Department for Education has strengthened the national approach to school attendance, placing greater emphasis on schools and local authorities taking appropriate action where attendance remains a concern.

I would like to make parents and carers aware that seven families from Barr Beacon School have already been referred to the Local Authority this year as a consequence of poor school attendance. Furthermore, one family has incurred a total financial penalty of **£1,284** following the escalation of their case.

These are significant consequences and demonstrate that poor attendance is taken seriously by both the school and Walsall Council. Whilst legal intervention is never our preferred outcome, we have a statutory responsibility to address persistent and unauthorised absence.

Under the Department for Education's national framework, schools and local authorities must consider whether a penalty notice is appropriate when a pupil accumulates **10 sessions (5 days total) of unauthorised absence within a rolling period of 10 school weeks**. This includes unauthorised holidays during term time, unexplained absences and arriving late after the school register has closed (after 09:10am). Each case is considered individually, with appropriate support offered where necessary. However, where support has

not been successful, has not been engaged with, or is not appropriate, cases may be referred to Walsall Council for legal intervention.

We will continue to take firm and appropriate action where attendance falls below expectations, particularly where parents and carers fail to engage with the support and interventions offered by the school.

We understand that there may be underlying reasons affecting school attendance, and we remain committed to working with families to remove barriers to learning. A range of support services are available to help you and your child.

Where attendance concerns are identified, parents and carers may be invited to attend meetings with school staff to discuss their child's attendance and agree appropriate next steps. We strongly encourage all families to engage with these meetings and the support offered, as early intervention is essential in preventing further absence and potential legal action.

We also recognise that parents may sometimes be unsure whether their child is well enough to attend school. To support families in making informed decisions about their child's attendance, we encourage you to refer to the attached document: Is My Child Too Ill for School?

https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/

Thank you once again to the many families who continue to prioritise excellent attendance. Your support makes a genuine difference, and together we can ensure that every pupil has the best possible opportunity to succeed.

If you need assistance or wish to discuss your child's attendance further, please contact your child's Head of House. You can do this by emailing postbox@barrbeaconschool.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K Hibbs

Headteacher