



Brentfield Primary School

Children of Today, Champions for Tomorrow

Attendance Policy

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Aims

Good attendance at school is not just beneficial but essential in enabling pupils to reach their full educational achievement. Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%. Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically and as well as this, coming to school helps to cultivate our BRAVE school values:

- Belong
- Responsible
- Aspirational
- Value diversity
- Empowered

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence by building strong relationships with families

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legal Requirements

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of The Education Act 1996
- Part 3 of The Education Act 2002
- Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to:

- DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

As a school we will:

- Give parents details on attendance in our newsletters and school website.
- Report to parent/carers regarding their child's attendance via Arbor.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual class achievements and awarding class attendance trophies.
- Incentivise good or improved attendance through rewards and participation in special events.
- Co-ordinate 'Early Bird' weeks with the school allocated Education Welfare Officer.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff responsible for monitoring attendance are:

- Nicola Harmer (Head Teacher)
- Sunita Rawat (Assistant Head & designated lead responsible for attendance)
- Sam Matthews (Family Support Manager)
- Wendy Poghosyan (Welfare Officer)
- Katrina Lovett (Local Authority Education Welfare Officer)

Responsibilities of the governing board

- Promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties in the implementation of the policy
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data

Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Monitor school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

Responsibilities of the designated senior leader responsible for attendance

- Lead attendance across the school
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- Have an oversight of data analysis
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

Responsibilities of the welfare officer and Family Support Officer

- Monitor and analyse attendance data
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance at weekly Inclusion meetings.
- Work with education welfare officer to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Alongside the senior leader, build relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

Responsibilities of classroom staff

- Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately and on time.
- Promote and reward good attendance with pupils.
- Liaise with appropriate colleagues on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying problems that may account for a child's absence.
- Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

- Inform the school on the first day of absence (by 8.30) and subsequent days of absence
- Discuss in advance any planned absences
- Support the school in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- Not let children take time off for minor ailments
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact
- Build a routine that promotes good punctuality and attendance

Responsibilities of pupils

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time and go straight to class
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk or welfare officer if they are late

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

Role of local authority attendance officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work together in resolving any issues. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to Brent Council's Education Welfare Service. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Education Welfare Officer can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available on Brent Council's website on www.brent.gov.uk.

Recording and Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality

Recording attendance

Legally the register must be taken twice a day. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session in the afternoon. Morning registers will close by 8.55am and afternoon registers will be taken by 12.45pm for Early Years, 1.00pm for Y1 and 1.10pm for Years 2-6.

Children arriving late (after 8.45am) must enter the school via the main office. In accordance with the DfE's regulations and guidance if a child arrives late, they will receive an 'L' mark that shows them to be late. After registers are closed, the child will receive a 'U' mark. This is an unauthorised absence.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

The school will monitor attendance and punctuality weekly, half-termly, termly and annually at an individual and whole school level. In addition, class attendance will be monitored weekly and shared with pupils.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average and share this with the governing board.

Parents/carers will be contacted by the school if their child is regularly late or absent. If this continues to be a concern, the Welfare Officer or Family Support Manager will meet with parents to discuss the importance of good time keeping and how this might be achieved. See Appendix 1

Late Collections (After School)

On the rare occasion that parents are running late, parents should call the school office and inform them of the reason why they are unable to collect on time and provide an estimated time of arrival. If a child is not collected within 10 minutes of school finishing, they are brought back into school and a charge of £1.50 will apply. Please note that collections after 3.40pm will incur full after school club fees of £9.50.

End of school day:

Early Years and Key stage 1 - 3:10pm

KS2 - 3:15pm

Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school will be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised based on the information about the reason for absence. This information should be provided on the first morning of the pupil being absent. It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school, but the government has produced some simple guidelines. Appendix 2

Authorised Absence

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like:

- Illness (not minor ailments)
- Medical (hospital appointments which unavoidably fall in school time)
- Emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" will be given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (celebrating birthdays etc.)
- Absences which have not been adequately explained
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed.

These types of absence can lead to Brent Council using sanctions and/or legal proceedings against parents/carers.

Legal Sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent/carer must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

The decision on whether to issue a penalty notice may consider:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

Children Missing Education (CME)

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Service.

If no reason has been given for a child's absence after 3 days and the school have not been able to contact parents/carers, a referral will be made to the local authority Education Welfare Service.

The service will also advise on when schools should make referrals to Brent Family Front Door or call the police.

Moving School

If a pupil is moving out of the area, to a new school or being home schooled, parents/carers must inform the school in advance and complete a leavers form.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

Reporting Absence Procedures

If a child is absent, we expect parents to:

- Contact the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence. This is done by calling 020 8965 5326, pressing option 1 and leaving a message.
- Call the school each day their child is absent unless it is a known long-term illness/absence.

If a child is absent, as a school, we will:

- Telephone or send a text on the first day of absence

Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact Social Care or the Education Welfare Officer
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and update this on our system
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

As part of our safeguarding procedures, where a child has a social worker, absence information (reported or unexplained) will be shared with the relevant contact. This is usually communicated on the day of absence.

Leave of Absence

From September 2013 the Department for Education amended the Pupil Registration Regulations. The amendments make clear that Head teachers **may not** grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There are many situations which could constitute exceptional circumstances. At Brentfield School, we interpret 'exceptional' in this context as being unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. The head teacher will consider each case on an individual basis (looking at past requests, attendance and attainment). Most requests will be refused based on the fact that there are 13 weeks holiday a year.

Only **1 day** is permitted for religious observance per year.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and we may refer parent/carers to Brent Council's Education Welfare Service and parent/carers may receive a Formal Warning, Education Penalty Notice or be prosecuted in court.

If requesting term time leave, a form must be completed in advance. Forms are available from the school office or on the school website. It should not be assumed that the request will be granted and flights should not be booked prior to receiving a reply from the head teacher.

Inclusion and Diversity

We recognise the importance of good mental health and social development and encourage our school community to feel empowered and safe to raise concerns. We value the diversity within our school community and challenge views which may negatively impact the well-being of others.

We are committed to being an anti-racist and anti-bullying school. Our community should feel confident that if racist or bullying incidents occur, these will be challenged and fully investigated to ensure that this does not hinder good attendance and punctuality.

Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

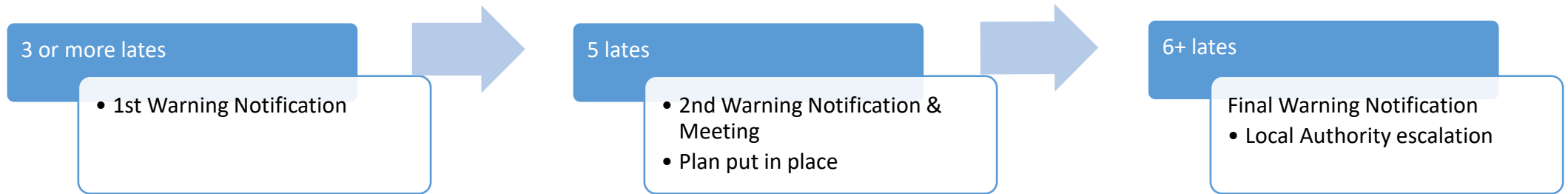
- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

What your child's attendance percentage means

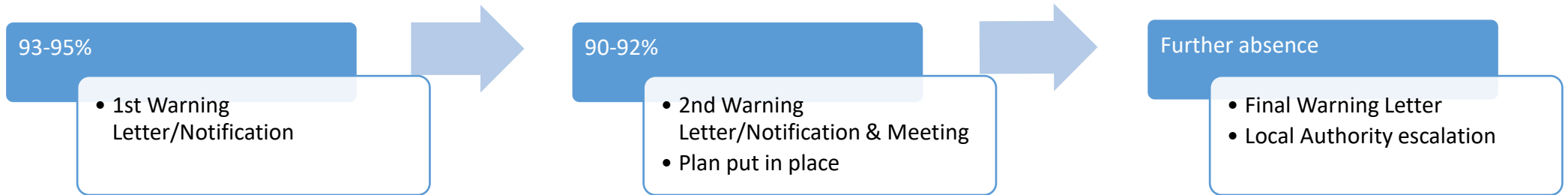
ATTENDANCE	
100 – 99%	<p>Exceptional Best chances of success in school.</p>
98 – 96%	<p>Good Best chances of success in school.</p>
95% or below	<p>Room for Improvement Children's attendance is below average and they will be missing out on learning. Parents must work with the school to improve attendance. Attendance will be carefully monitored. Contact will be made by the Welfare Officer or Family Support Manager if attendance does not improve.</p>
90% or below	<p>Cause for concern Any child whose attendance falls below 90% is regarded nationally as a child who has persistent absence. Schools have targets to reduce the levels of persistent absence and the school and local authority work closely with families to support them in getting their child to school each day. However, if a child's attendance does not improve next steps may include a penalty notice and possible legal proceedings.</p> <p>At Brentfield, this is a safeguarding concern.</p>
50% or below	<p>Serious concern Lowest chance of pupil success and possible legal proceedings.</p> <p>At Brentfield, this is a safeguarding concern.</p>

Appendix 1

Punctuality Process



Attendance Process



Staff responsible for monitoring attendance and punctuality may not work progressively through each stage and may escalate or deescalate to whichever stage is the best fit for the individual circumstance. The reasons for this decision will be discussed and documented during Inclusion meetings.

Additional support may be sought from external partners at any stage to support with improving attendance and punctuality in order to support the removal of any potential barriers.

At all stages attendance and punctuality will be tracked.

Appendix 2

Is my child too ill for School

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

Coughs, Colds and Covid

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes.

High temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.

Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better, or their high temperature goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.

Ringworm

If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP. It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever

If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP, otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome, because once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has slapped cheek syndrome, take them to see a GP and let their school know if they're diagnosed with it.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school for 2 days after their symptoms have gone.