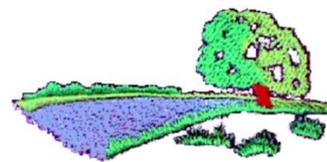


Brentfield Primary School



Growing Through Learning

Attendance Policy

Head Teacher	Nicola Harmer
Person Responsible	Anna Amartey
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41-43 Meadow Garth, London, NW10 0SL
Tel: 020 8965 5326
Email: admin@brentfield.brent.sck.uk
Website: www.brentfield.brent.sch.uk

1. Introduction

Brentfield Primary School is a good school and your child plays his/her part in making it so. We aim to provide a learning environment which promotes excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. It is very important therefore that all children attend school regularly and on time.

2. Why Regular Attendance Is Important

Learning: - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly.

Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, promoting the welfare and life opportunities for your child encompasses: -

Attendance

Behaviour Management including Anti-bullying

Health and Safety

Access to the Curriculum

Failing to attend school on a regular basis will lead to a child under-achieving and can be considered as a safeguarding matter.

3. 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 parents termly on how their children are performing in school regarding their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment
- Celebrate good attendance
- Reward good or improving attendance
- Run promotional events when parents, pupils and staff can work together on raising attendance levels across the school.

4. The Law relating to safeguarding

The Law relating to attendance - Education Act 1996, section 7: Duty of parents to secure education of children of compulsory school age.

The parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him to receive efficient full-time education suitable—

(a) to his age, ability and aptitude, and

(b) to any special educational needs he may have,

either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Education (Non-Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 2011. Schools and colleges must have regard to it when carrying out their duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

5. 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 cause of absence is given. This information should be given the first morning of the child being absent.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like illness, medical eg hospital appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

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
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to be marked as present
- Going shopping, looking after other children or celebrating birthdays
- 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. Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a child is reluctant to attend school, it is everyone's responsibility and in the child's best interest to find out why.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and at Brentfield Primary School we seek parents fullest support and co-operation to tackle persistent absenteeism.

All absence is monitored thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark OR is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and parents will be informed of this immediately of this concern. PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through the school's pastoral system and academic data tracking. If there is improvement in their attendance, then they are referred to Brent's Education Welfare Officer who will arrange a meeting with parents to offer support and/or identify solutions.

6. Reporting Absence Procedures

If a child is absent, we expect parents to:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence;
- Send a note in on the first day a child returns with an explanation of the absence – you must do this even if you have already telephoned us;

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

- Telephone or sent a text through 'parent mail' on the first day of absence;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Officer, Deputy Head /or Headteacher if absences persist
- Refer the matter to the Brent Educational Welfare Officer if attendance moves below **90%**.

Telephone Numbers:

Contact numbers for children are updated regularly to ensure that parents are contacted when there is the need.

7. Role of School Attendance Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. 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. He/she 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

How Absence is Managed

Letters to Parents

Letters to parents of individual pupils with poor school attendance are very effective. Identification of children whose attendance of less than **90%** are sent a letter on a regular basis. Class teachers do provide names of children about whom they have attendance concerns to the School Attendance Officer.

Poor Attenders - Meetings with Parents and Pupils

Analysis of school attendance data will identify those children whose attendance is at a level which causes concern. The local authority sets this level and as school plan we arrange a meeting with the Headteacher and/or School Attendance Officer and identify reasons for the poor attendance, strategies to address it, targets to achieve and date for review.

Parents' Evenings – Class teachers discuss the importance of good attendance and punctuality with parents and strategies the school will use if a child is persistently absent or late.

8. Lateness

Poor punctuality is not acceptable at Brentfield Primary. We believe that if a child misses the start of the day he/she misses an important part of learning and any news for the day. Late arriving children also disrupt lessons, can be embarrassing for the child and can also encourage absence.

How Lateness is managed

- **Start and End of day times** – School starts at **8.50 am**. The school gates are open at **8.30**. **Parents are responsible for supervising their children until 8.45 am when the children go to their classes.**
- Reception start at **8.45 am** and end at **3.20 pm**.
- Year 1 to Year 6 start at **8.45 am** and ends at **3.30 pm**.
- Nursery in the morning starts at 8.30 am and ends at 11.30 pm. Nursery in the afternoon starts at 12.30 pm and ends at 3.30 pm. Nursery parents come in and exit from the school's main entrance.
- Registers are marked by **8.55 am**. In accordance with the DfES regulations and guidance, if a child arrives after that time they will receive an 'L' mark that shows them to be late. At **9.05 am** the registers will be closed. All children arriving after **8.50 am, must be accompanied to the school office by the parent/guardian**, where they will be asked to sign them in. After **9.15 am** a child will receive a 'U' mark which will mean he/she have an unauthorised

absence. This may mean that the child's parents could face the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

- Lateness is monitored regularly. If a child has a persistent late record parents will be asked to meet with the Deputy Headteacher and/or School Attendance Officer to resolve the problem, but parents can approach the school office at any time if they are having problems getting their child to school on time.
- **Late Patrols** - The school gate will be patrolled as a way of targeting punctuality issues to improve whole school attendance and punctuality and to make children and parents aware of the importance of good punctuality and the impact this has on children's learning and achievement. The patrol team is made up of Senior Leaders and will commence 10 minutes prior to the start of school and 10 minutes after the start of school. This patrol will occur on several occasions close together initially, and then further ad hoc occasions to remind people of the importance of punctuality.

9. Holidays in Term Time

Taking holidays in term time will affect a child's schooling as much as any other absence and parents are expected to support Brentfield Primary by not taking their children away during school time. There have been significant country changes to the attendance regulations across the country the country. From September 1st 2013. Below is a quotation direct from the Department for Education circular:

*'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 this 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 is 13 weeks holiday a year to visit relatives.*

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 you to Brent Council's Education Welfare Service and you may receive a Formal Warning, Education Penalty Notice or be prosecuted in court.

If you need to request Term Time leave you must complete a form available from the school office. 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.

10. School Targets, Projects and Special Initiatives

The school has targets to improve attendance and children have an important part to play in meeting these targets.

Targets for the school are set by Brent Council annually and this year the target is **96%**. Each class has class targets that are reviewed each half term. The minimum level of attendance for this school is **96%** attendance and parents will be kept updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares each half term.

We aim to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to successful schooling and we believe our children can be amongst the best in London.

11. Promoting Attendance - Rewards

Good attendance is rewarded in Brentfield Primary. These can be given to individuals or classes.

Individuals:

- children can receive certificates for 100% or improved attendance or punctuality.

Classes

- The class with the best attendance will be given the attendance cup each week.

The task of calculating which children or classes receive rewards would be done **weekly**.

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

Through the school year children's absences and punctuality are monitored regularly. This enables the school to identify where improvements need to be made. Information on any projects or initiatives that will focus on these areas will be provided in our newsletters.

Throughout the year parents will be kept informed of school expectations and procedures through Parent Mail and our Newsletters

Staff responsible for monitoring attendance are:

- Class teachers
- Nicola Harmer (Head Teacher)
- Anna Amartey (Deputy Head)
- Annette Dian (Attendance officer)
- Andrea Broderick (Brent Education Welfare Office)