



# BROADFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

# ATTENDANCE POLICY

Issued: Autumn 2015

Due for Review: Autumn 2018

Committee: School Improvement

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**Signed:**

*F. McQueen*

**Date:**

**Position:**



## **Aims**

Broadfield Primary School aims to maximise attendance rates (above 96% for every pupil) in order to ensure that all students are able to take the fullest advantage of the learning experiences available to them and make good academic progress.

## **Statutory Framework**

Under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, a pupil is required to attend regularly at the school where he/she is a registered pupil.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the absence be authorised. (see below).

We have to report our absence figures to the Department for Education every year. One of Ofsted's judgements on the school will be on attendance.

## **Responsibilities**

Maintaining good punctual attendance at Broadfield Primary School is the responsibility of everyone in the school community – pupils, parents and staff. The Governors take a particularly strong view about poor attendance and lateness.

## **Parents**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that their children attend school regularly, punctually, properly dressed and equipped and ready to learn. If a child is prevented for any reason from attending, or is late, parents are requested to notify the school as soon as possible, but not later than 9.30am on the morning of absence – by phone call, or on the SchoolComms e-mail system. A pupil's absence from school will always be considered as unauthorised until a satisfactory explanation is forthcoming from the parent.

Parents must phone the school if their child is absent. We will call you if we don't hear from you. If we cannot make contact we will be concerned for the child's safety. We may need to contact social services or the police if we are seriously concerned.



## School

Staff will endeavour to encourage good attendance and punctuality through personal example. Attendance is the responsibility of all school staff (not just teaching and pastoral staff). The school will employ a range of strategies (see below) to encourage good attendance and punctuality and will promptly investigate all absenteeism firmly and consistently.

## Registration

All children are expected to line up outside promptly. The doors for reception children are open from 8.45. Please leave junior children on the Key Stage 2 playground from 8:45am, doors to these classrooms are opened at 8.50 there is a member of staff on duty.

Registers are called promptly. Your child will be marked late if they haven't entered the classroom along with the rest of the class.

Pupils who are late must enter the school through the main school entrance. Parents will need to complete a late form explaining the exceptional reasons for the delay E.g. the car broke down. A pupil who arrives **late** will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence** after 9.30am unless an acceptable reason for lateness is given.

All absences are recorded electronically. The Head teacher is informed on a regular basis of those children causing concern. Letters will be sent to the parents of pupils whose attendance or punctuality is of concern. The head reports absence figures to the governors and has a responsibility to maximize school attendance.

## Features of good practice

- take the register promptly
- question a child if they have been absent
- check that we have had notification of the reason for their absence
- meet the parents if there are several absences

## Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

If you feel that your child needs to be absent from school please complete an absence from school application form (See Appendix 2). It will be returned to you after the head teacher has considered whether your stated reasons are exceptional. Exceptional reasons are when the reasons are beyond your control. The child should be in school if the request is declined then.



Absence can be **authorised** if:

- The pupil was ill and the head teacher is satisfied with the reasons for absence
- There is a family bereavement.
- The pupil is attending an approved off-site activity or is receiving special off-site tuition.
- The pupil is participating in an approved public performance or sporting activity.
- The pupil has a music/dance exam.
- Hospital/orthodontic appointments when a copy of the appointment is provided.

Absence will be **unauthorised** if:

- No explanation is forthcoming
- The school is dissatisfied with the explanation
- The pupil is absent for **unexceptional** reasons

Examples of **unauthorised** absences outside the 13 weeks school holidays. (including but not limited to) :

- Holidays which are paid for by other family members.
- Educational trips.
- Financial reasons such as not being able to afford to go on holiday at peak times.
- Family weddings, funerals, commitments & emergencies either abroad or at home will be deemed unauthorised until satisfactory proof is received and approved.
- Parents / carer's work commitments, holiday times.
- Childcare cover issues.
- Parent / carer's health issues.

## **Holidays**

Parents do not have the right to take their child out of school for a holiday. Leave in term time can only be given in exceptional circumstances. Please book holidays during the 13 weeks school holidays.

## **Early collection**

Please do not collect your child prior to the end of the school day unless there are exceptional circumstances. Routine medical and dental appointments should be made outside of school hours. You will be asked for a copy of hospital appointments which will then be authorised. Please bring the children straight back to school after the appointment.



## **Working with the Attendance Improvement Officer (AIO)**

Broadfield School works in partnership with the allocated AIO to improve attendance for individual pupils and the whole school. The Head teacher meets the AIO on an agreed schedule. Broadfield School works with individual pupils and their parents to improve poor attendance. When attendance does not improve sufficiently, and after discussion with the AIO, the school will make a formal referral to proceed with prosecution.

### **Procedures for following up absence**

- Parents are expected to either ring or physically visit the office to inform the school of an absence on the day by 9:30am.
- If a pupil is absent and we have not been notified the office will contact the parents.
- If a pupil is persistently (or intermittently) absent, the head teacher will write to the parents and invite them to attend a meeting at school.
- If a pupil is persistently absent (or late) and the school's efforts to effect an improvement have been unsuccessful, the situation will be referred to the Attendance Improvement Officer during their consultation visits.
- The Attendance Improvement Officer checks the registers each term and parents will be notified if their child's absences are too high.

### **Strategies for promoting Attendance**

- Broadfield Primary School offers an environment in which pupils feel valued and welcomed. The school's ethos demonstrates that pupils feel that their presence in school is important, that they will be missed when they are absent/late and that follow up action will be taken.
- Children who achieve 100% attendance per term are awarded a certificate
- A varied and flexible curriculum is offered to all pupils. Every effort is made to ensure that learning tasks are matched to the pupils' needs and that children enjoy their learning and look forward to coming to school.
- Attendance data is collected weekly and analysed in order to help identify patterns, set targets, correlate attendance with achievement and support an inform policy/practice.
- Parents are regularly reminded (via newsletters, the school brochure, parents' evenings etc) the importance of good attendance.
- Pupils who are absent through sickness for any extended period of time will (when appropriate) have work sent home to them and will be re-integrated back into school upon their return.



- The head teacher will make a report to the school's governing body on attendance matters termly.
- The head teacher has regular meetings with the school's Attendance Improvement Officer in order to identify and support those pupils who are experiencing attendance difficulties.
- Children who have been absent will not normally be given work to catch up from their teachers.

### **Registers**

In assessing attendance levels, the class register is of paramount importance. Registers are legal documents – should the parents of a persistent non-attendeo be prosecuted by the LEA under Section 199 of the 1993 Education Act, then the register would be used in the court action.

It is imperative that children are constantly reminded that the school takes attendance very seriously.

### **Lateness**

Repeated absence at the beginning of a school session can amount to failure to attend regularly for the purpose of section 199 of the 1993 Education Act.

In addressing lateness everyone must follow the rules relating to lateness consistently. This is particularly important when siblings in different classes are late.

### **Court Action**

Where all our efforts to improve attendance fail, the school will instruct the AIO to arrange for the parents to be summoned to attend a hearing concerning their child's persistently poor attendance. The courts are empowered to fine parents and to order that the parents ensure the child attends school regularly.



## APPENDIX 2: ABSENCE REQUEST FORM

# Application to request an absence from school for exceptional circumstances.

### Guidance

1. In the interest of your child we strive to achieve minimum 95% attendance. Studies have shown that children with excellent attendance are likely to achieve better results.
2. Please only request an absence if the circumstances are likely to be considered exceptional i.e. the circumstances are beyond your control.
3. If you feel your reasons are exceptional please write the reason in the box below giving specific details of the circumstances.
4. Please hand in the form to the office as early as possible i.e. at least a week before the first day of absence.
5. Please provide copies of medical appointments or examination entries and attach to the form.
6. It is not possible to give a definitive list of absences that will be authorised but the following examples might help:- funeral; hospital appointment; orthodontic treatment; music/dance exams; competing in a national/international sporting event; urgent doctor's appointment.
7. Urgent medical appointments are defined as needing urgent treatment such as antibiotics.
8. Please book family holidays during the 13 week school holidays. The cost of a holiday is not an acceptable reason to take time off within term time.
9. Children are expected to attend school for the entire day. Please help us to avoid difficult situations by not requesting to collect the children early unless there are exceptional reasons.
10. If the request is not authorised we are asking you not to take your child out of school. We would be very grateful if you could support us with this.

### The decision making

The Head teacher has a duty to monitor and address attendance problems within the school. She will only authorise absences where she considers the reason to be beyond your control. This ensures that decisions are as objective as possible and all families treated equally.



## Form

<b>Child's name</b>		<b>Class teacher</b>	
<b>Child's name</b>		<b>Class teacher</b>	
<b>Child's name</b>		<b>Class teacher</b>	

<b>First day of absence</b>	<b>Last day of absence</b>	<b>No of days absent from school</b>
/ /	/ /	

**Exceptional reason for your children to be absent from school**

**Parent/guardian signature:**

/ /

**Date:**

**Head teacher's decision:-**

**This absence is:- authorised / not authorised**

**If unauthorised comment from Head teacher:-**

**Signed:**

/ /

**Date:**



# Policy Audit

**Policy** Attendance  
**Committee** School Improvement  
**Policy Owner** C.M

Date	Original Version Number	Amendment Made	Reason for Change	New Version Number	Committee Ratified Date	FGB Ratified Date
25.09.2013	1	Wormley attendance policy adopted at the request of Head Teacher & approved by School Improvement Committee	Adoption of alternative policy	V2.1		
		V2.1 additional unauthorised absence detail on page 4				

Attendance Policy  
 Issued: Chris Murphy  
 Autumn 2013  
 Due for Review: Autumn 2015  
 Issue Number: V2.1 25.09.2013  
 Committee: School Improvement

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