



Attendance Policy

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1 Introduction and Background

Brookside recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment.

This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding
- Ensure every pupil has access to the full time education to which they are entitled
- Ensure that pupils succeed whilst at school
- Ensure that pupils have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or later arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of other children in the same class.

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

2 Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – Parents / Carers, pupils and all members of school staff.

To help us all to focus on this the school will:

- Report to Parents / Carers annually on how their child's attendance with the annual school report
- Contact Parents / Carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance
- Give Parents / Carers details on attendance in our newsletters and communications
- Celebrate and reward good attendance

3 Understanding Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school with a justifiable reason, such as illness, medical / dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable causes.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and / or legal proceedings. 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 after registration has closed
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Day trips and holidays in term time

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 / Carers and the child. If a Parent / Carer thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then the school will work with that family to help understand the root cause of the problem. The school can use outside agencies to help with this such as behaviour support advisors.

4 Persistent Absenteeism

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' (PA) when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year **for whatever reason**. Absence at this level will have a considerable impact on a child's education. The school will need the fullest support and co-operation from parents to tackle this.

The school monitors all absence and the reasons given 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 the school will inform the Parents / Carers immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully. The school also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment.

5 Absence Procedures

If a child is to be absent from school, the Parent / Carer must follow these procedures:

- Contact the school as soon as possible on the first day of absence and before 9.20am, or
- Call into school and report to reception

If child is absent from school without notice, the school will:

- Telephone the Parent / Carer by 9.20am on the first day of absence if the school have not heard from them
- Invite the Parent / Carer in to discuss the situation with a member of the school's staff

6 The Education Welfare Officer (EWO)

Parents / Carers are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems regarding attendance. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Education Welfare Officer from the Local Authority. 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 unauthorized absences persist, these officers 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 from the school or the Local Authority.

Alternatively, Parents / Carers or children may wish to contact the EWO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Education Authority.

7 Lateness

Lateness and poor punctuality is not acceptable and detrimental to a child's learning and wider school experience. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss work and valuable teaching time and learning time. Pupils who arrive late also disrupt lessons, this is detrimental towards the other children and can be embarrassing for the child - further encouraging absenteeism.

Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and onwards into the wider world.

How the school manage lateness:

- The school day starts at **8.50am** and The school expect our children to be in the playground before this time ready to line up when the signal is given
- Registers are marked by **9.00am**. A child will receive a late mark if they are not in the classroom by **9.10am**.

In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after registration, they will receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. This may mean facing the possibility of a Penalty Notice if the problem persists.

If a child has a persistently late record Parents / Carers will be asked to meet with a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team to resolve the problem. Parents / Carers can approach the school at any time if there are problems getting their children to school on time.

All members of staff at Brookside Primary School will encourage punctuality by being good role models to our children and by celebrating good class punctuality.

8 Holidays in Term Time

Leave of absence for family holidays and days out will not be authorised during term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Authorised leave of absence is not an entitlement as leave taken in term time will adversely affect a child's academic progress and their attendance record. Where exceptional circumstances do exist, they include:

- When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis
- For service personnel who are about to be deployed or are returning from deployment, providing the leave will have minimal disruption to the child's education

Leave for these reasons will not be authorised:

- Holidays, including the availability of cheap holidays
- Availability of the desired accommodation
- Overlap with beginning or end of term
- Shopping trips
- Birthday and family treats
- Theatre trips
- Going out for the day

If an unauthorised absence is taken anyway, the school strongly recommends that parents notify the school in advance. Any period of leave taken without notification to the school may attract sanctions such as a Penalty Notice.

9 Roles and Responsibilities

The Link Governor for Attendance is responsible for monitoring attendance with the Headteacher and for reporting to the Governing Body.

The school has a legal duty to publish its absence figures to parents and to promote attendance and the Headteacher and the Governing Body are responsible for this.

Equally, however, Parents / Carers have a duty to ensure that their children attend school and arrive on time.

All school staff are committed to working with Parents / Carers and pupils as the best way to ensure as high a level of attendance as possible.

10 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At Brookside School, we aim to ensure that no member of the school community experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination within the learning environment because of their age; any

disability they may have; their ethnicity, colour or national origin; their gender; their religion or beliefs.

The school value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against anyone because of 'differences'. The school believes that all our children matter and we value their families too. The school give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when devising and implementing school policies and procedures.

11 Policy Review

This policy will be regularly reviewed by the Governing Body and updated in line with Brookside Primary School's Policy Schedule.