Attendance Policy

Broadmayne First School and Nursery

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1. Statement of intent

Broadmayne First School believes that in order to facilitate teaching and learning, good attendance is essential. Pupils cannot achieve their full potential if they do not regularly attend school.

We understand that barriers to attendance are complex, and that some pupils find it harder than others to attend school; therefore, we will continue to prioritise cultivating a safe and supportive environment in our schools, as well as strong and trusting relationships with pupils and parents.

We take a whole-school approach to securing good attendance and recognise the impact that our efforts in other areas – such as the curriculum, behaviour standards, bullying, SEND support, pastoral support, and the effective use of resources such as pupil premium – can have on improving pupil attendance.

We are committed to:

- Promoting and modelling high attendance and its benefits.
- Ensuring equality and fairness for all.
- Ensuring this attendance policy is clear and easily understood by staff, pupils and parents.
- Intervening early and working with other agencies to ensure the health and safety of our pupils.
- Building strong relationships with families to overcome barriers to attendance.
- Working collaboratively with other schools in the area, as well as other agencies.
- Ensuring parents follow the framework set in section 7 of the Education Act 1996, which states that the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause them to receive efficient full-time education suitable to their age, ability and aptitude, and to any SEND they may have, either by regular attendance at school or otherwise.
- Regularly monitoring and analysing attendance and absence data to identify pupils or cohorts that require more support.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations (as amended)
- The Children (Performances and Activities) (England) Regulations 2014
- Children and Young Persons Act 1963
- DfE Statutory Guidance: 'Working together to improve school attendance'
- DfE Statutory Guidance: 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE)
- DfE Guidance: 'Children missing education' (CME)
- DfE Guidance: 'Providing remote education'
- Dorset Council Local Authority Attendance Guidance and Penalty Notice Code of Conduct

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body has responsibility for:

- Monitoring the implementation of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Promoting the importance of good attendance through the school's ethos and policies.
- Arranging attendance training for all relevant staff that is appropriate to their role.
- Working with the Headteacher to set goals for attendance and providing support and challenge around delivery against those goals.
- Regularly reviewing attendance data.
- Sharing effective practice on attendance management and improvement across schools.
- Ensuring that this policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including, but not limited to, ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

- Handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the Complaints Procedures Policy.
- Having regard to KCSIE when making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The Headteacher is responsible for:

- The day-to-day implementation and management of this policy and all relevant procedures across the school.
- Ensuring all parents are aware of the school's attendance expectations and procedures.
- Ensuring that every pupil has access to full-time education and will act as early as possible to address patterns of absence.
- The overall strategic approach to attendance in school.
- Developing a clear vision for improving attendance.

Staff are responsible for:

- Following this policy and ensuring pupils do so too.
- Ensuring this policy is implemented fairly and consistently.
- Modelling good attendance behaviour.
- Using their professional judgement and knowledge of individual pupils to inform decisions as to whether any welfare concerns should be escalated.
- Where designated, taking the attendance register at the relevant times during the school day.

The Admin Officer responsible for attendance is responsible for:

- Monitoring attendance and the impact of interventions.
- Analysing attendance data and identifying areas of intervention and improvement.
- Communicating with pupils and parents with regard to attendance.
- Following up on incidents of persistent poor attendance.
- Informing the LA of any pupil being deleted from the admission and attendance registers.

Pupils are responsible for:

- Attending their lessons and any agreed activities when at school.

- Arriving punctually to lessons when at school.

Parents are responsible for:

- Providing accurate and up-to-date contact details.
- Providing the school with more than one emergency contact number.
- Updating the school via the Arbor system if their details change.
- The attendance of their children at school.
- Promoting good attendance with their children.

4. Definitions

The following definitions apply for the purposes of this policy:

Absence:

- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Not attending school for any reason

Authorised absence:

- An absence for sickness for which the school has granted leave
- Medical or dental appointments which unavoidably fall during school time, for which the school has granted leave
- Religious or cultural observances for which the school has granted leave
- An absence due to a family emergency

Unauthorised absence:

- Parents keeping children off school unnecessarily or without reason
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Arrival at school after the register has closed
- Absence due to shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Absence due to day trips and holidays in term-time which have not been agreed
- Leaving school for no reason during the day

Persistent absence (PA):

- Missing 10 percent or more of schooling across the year for any reason (attendance less than 90%).

Missing education

- Not registered at a school and not receiving suitable education in a setting other than a school.

5. Attendance expectations

The school has high expectations for pupils' attendance and punctuality and ensures that these expectations are communicated regularly to parents and pupils.

Pupils will be expected to attend school punctually every day they are required to be at school, for the full day.

The school day starts at 8.45 and pupils will be expected to be on the school site by 8.40am, when the doors open. Pupils will have a morning break at 10.30am which will last until 10.45 am, and a lunch break at 12.00, which will last until 1.00 pm.

Registers will be taken as follows through the school day:

- The morning register will be marked by 9.00am. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time. Pupils attending after this time will receive a mark to show that they were on site, but this will count as a late mark.
- The morning register will close at 9.30am. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they do not attend school before this time.
- The afternoon register will be marked by 1.05pm. Pupils will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by this time.
- The afternoon register will close at 1.15pm. Pupils will receive a mark of absence if they are not present.

6. Absence Procedures

Section 6: Absence Procedures

Parents are required to contact the school office via telephone or email before 9:00am on the first day of their child's absence and must provide a reason for the absence. Parents are required to call or email every day that the child remains absent.

Where a pupil is absent, and their parent has not contacted the school by the close of the morning register to report the absence, administrative staff will contact the parent via text message or email. If staff have not heard by 11:00am, a follow up telephone call to the parents will be made.

The school will always follow up any absences to:

- Ascertain the reason for the absence.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken.
- Identify whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- Identify the correct code to enter onto the school census system.

The school will not routinely request medical evidence in most circumstances where a pupil is absent due to illness; however, the school reserves the right to request supporting evidence where there is genuine and reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

In cases where attendance drops below 90% (Persistent Absence) or shows an emerging pattern of concern, arrangements will be made for parents to meet with the Headteacher to discuss reasons for absence, address barriers, and agree next steps to support improvement. Where attendance fails to improve following internal supportive measures, the school will escalate concerns and liaise directly with Dorset Council's Local Authority Attendance Team in line with local statutory processes.

Where a pupil has not returned to school for 10 days after an authorised absence or is absent from school without authorisation for 20 consecutive school days, the school and Dorset Local Authority will make joint reasonable enquiries to establish the whereabouts of the pupil. If enquiries fail to locate the child, a Children Missing Education (CME) notification will be submitted to the Local Authority prior to removing the pupil from the admission register.

7. Attendance Register

The school uses Arbor to record and monitor attendance. This enables the school to easily analyse and share data with the appropriate authorities.

Designated staff members will take the attendance register at 9.00am and at 1.05pm. The register will record whether pupils are:

- Present.
- Absent.
- Attending an approved educational visit.
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances.

The school will use the national attendance codes to ensure attendance and absence are monitored and recorded in a consistent way. The following codes will be used:

- / = Present in the morning
- \ = Present in the afternoon
- L = Late arrival before the register has closed
- C = Leave of absence granted by the school
- C1 = Leave of absence regulated performance
- C2 = Leave of absence - Temporary part-time timetable
- D = Dual registered – at another educational establishment
- E = Excluded but no alternative provision made
- I = Illness
- J1 = Leave of absence interview
- K = Alternative provision provided by the LA
- M = Medical or dental appointments
- R = Religious observance
- B = Off-site education activity
- G = Unauthorised holiday
- O = Unauthorised absence
- P = Participating in a supervised sporting activity
- Q = Unable to attend - lack of LA access arrangements
- U = Arrived after registration closed
- N = Reason not yet provided
- X = Not required to be in school
- T = Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence
- V = Educational visit or trip

- Y1 = unable to attend - Transport not available
- Y2 = Unable to attend - Widespread travel emergency
- Y3 = Unable to attend - Unavoidable partial closure
- Y4 = Unable to attend - Unavoidable full closure
- Y5 = Unable to attend - Detention sentence
- Y6 - Unable to attend - Public Health Guidance/Law
- Y7 = Unable to attend - Unavoidable other than Y1-Y6
- Z = Pupil not on admission register

When the school has planned in advance to be fully or partially closed, the code '#' will be used for the relevant pupils who are absent. This code will also be used to record year groups who are not due to attend because the school has set different term dates for different years, e.g. induction days.

Pupils who are absent from school but are receiving remote education for any reason will be marked as absent in the register.

Every entry received into the attendance register will be preserved for three years.

8. Authorising Parental Absence Requests

Parents are required to request certain types of absence in advance. All requests for leave of absence will be considered by the Headteacher on an individual, case-by-case basis. The decision to grant or refuse leave rests at the sole discretion of the Headteacher, taking into account the specific exceptional circumstances presented and the best interests of the pupil.

Leave of absence

In line with statutory guidance, the school will only grant a pupil a leave of absence in exceptional circumstances. To request leave, parents must complete a Leave of Absence Form at least two weeks prior to the proposed start date, providing full details of the exceptional circumstances and the requested dates.

Any request for leave during term time will be considered on an individual basis, evaluating the specific context of the request alongside the pupil's broader educational needs. The school will not grant leave of absence for standard family holidays. Leave requests will be evaluated on their individual merits without pre-determined percentage cut-offs, ensuring every family's circumstances are fairly assessed.

If term-time leave is not granted, taking a pupil out of school will be recorded as an unauthorised absence (Code G) and may result in legal sanctions, such as a Notice to Improve or Penalty Notice issued in accordance with Dorset Council's Penalty Notice protocol. Leave of absence cannot be granted retrospectively.

Illness and healthcare appointments

Parents are expected to make medical or dental appointments outside of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, parents must request advance approval and ensure the pupil misses only the time necessary for the appointment.

Performances and activities, including paid work

Pupils engaging in licensed performances or activities requiring absence must obtain a licence from the Local Authority. The Headteacher will review each request individually to ensure appropriate educational support is maintained, rather than applying rigid percentage attendance cut-offs.

Religious observance

Parents must request absence for religious observance at least two weeks in advance. Absence will be authorised where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the relevant religious body.

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence

Where a pupil's parent belongs to a community covered by this code and is travelling for occupational purposes, leave must be requested at least two weeks in advance. Absences under this code are limited strictly to occupational travel.

9. SEND and health related absences

The school recognises that pupils with SEND and/or health conditions, including mental health issues, may face greater barriers to attendance than their peers, and will incorporate robust procedures to support pupils who find attending school difficult. In line with the SEND Policy and Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, the school will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for disabled pupils to reduce barriers to attendance, in line with any EHC plans or IHPs that have been implemented. The school will secure additional support from external partners to help bolster attendance where appropriate.

Where the school has concerns that a pupil's non-attendance may be related to mental health issues, parents will be contacted to discuss the issue and whether there are any contributory factors to their child's lack of attendance. Where staff have a mental health concern about a pupil that is also a safeguarding concern, they will inform the DSL and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed. All pupils will be supported with their mental health through support from the class teacher, our SENDCo and Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

If a pupil is unable to attend school for long periods of time due to their health, the school will:

- Inform the LA if a pupil is likely to be away from the school for more than 15 school days.
- Help the pupil reintegrate at school when they return.
- Make sure the pupil is kept informed about school events and clubs.
- Encourage the pupil to stay in contact with other pupils during their absence.

The school will incorporate an action plan to help any pupils with SEND and/or health issues cope with the stress and anxiety that attending school may cause them. Such plans will be regularly monitored and reviewed until the pupil is attending school as normal and there has been signs of significant improvement.

To support the attendance of pupils with SEND and/or health issues, the school will consider:

- Holding termly meetings to evaluate any implemented reasonable adjustments.
- Incorporating a pastoral support plan.
- Consider a reduced timetable.
- Consider whether a pupil can have somewhere quiet to spend lunch and breaktimes.
- Consider implementing a system whereby pupils can request to leave a classroom if they feel they need time out.
- Consider temporary late starts or early finishes.
- Consider phased returns to school where there has been a long absence.
- Tailored support to meet their individual needs.
- Consider a check-in and/or sensory work at the beginning of the school day.

10. Absence in exceptional circumstances

Exceptional circumstances will include when a pupil is unable to attend because:

- Transport provided by the school, LA or parent is not available and the pupil's home is not within walking distance.
- There has been widespread disruption to travel services which has prevented the pupil from attending.
- The pupil is in custody and will be detained for less than four months.

The use of a 'Y' code (1-7) for exceptional circumstances will be collected in the school census for statistical purposes.

11. Truancy

Truancy will be considered as any absence of part, or all, of one or more days from school, during which the school has not been notified of the cause behind such absence.

All staff will be actively engaged in supporting the regular attendance of pupils, and understand the importance of continuity in each pupil's learning.

Any pupil with permission to leave the school during the day must sign out at the school office and sign back in again on their return.

Immediate action will be taken when there are any concerns that a pupil might be truanting. If truancy is suspected, the headteacher is notified, and they will contact the parent in order to assess the reasons behind the pupil not attending school.

The following procedures will be taken in the event of a truancy:

- In the first instance, a letter of warning will be sent to the parents of the pupil, informing them of the truancy and stating that any future occurrences could result in further action being taken.
- If any further truancy occurs, then the school will consider issuing a penalty notice.
- A penalty notice will be issued where there is overt truancy, inappropriate parentally-condoned absence, excessive holidays in

term-time and persistent late arrival at school.

12. Missing children

Pupils will not be permitted to leave the school premises during the school day unless they have permission from the school.

If the pupil cannot be located on the school site parents will be informed and the police will be notified.

13. Attendance intervention

In order to ensure the school has effective procedures for managing absence, the Headteacher, supported by the administration officer responsible for attendance, will

- Establish a range of evidence-based interventions to address barriers to attendance.
- Monitor the implementation and quality of escalation procedures and seek robust evidence of the escalation procedures that work.
- Attend or lead attendance reviews in line with escalation procedures.
- Produce regular reports with analysis and detailed evaluation of relevant data (see monitoring and analysis of evidence).

The school will use attendance data, in line with the 'Monitoring and analysing absence' section of this policy, to develop specific strategies to improve attendance where patterns of absence are emerging. These strategies will be developed on a case-by-case basis, and will consider the particular needs of the pupils whom the intervention is designed to target.

The school will acknowledge outstanding attendance and punctuality in the following ways:

- Acknowledging outstanding attendance (99% or higher) on half termly attendance letters to all parents
- Celebration 100% attendance at our annual Celebration Assembly
- Celebrating class attendance in the school newsletter

14. Working with parents to improve attendance

The school believes that working together with families is the key to improving attendance. The school aims to keep parents well informed on the child's attendance through regular attendance letters to all parents. Parents will be given information on the importance of attendance and the impact of poor attendance on pupils.

The school will work to cultivate strong, respectful relationships with parents and families to ensure their trust and engagement. Open and honest communication will be maintained with pupils and their families about the expectations of school life, attendance and performance so that they understand what to expect and what is expected of them. The school will liaise with other agencies working with pupils and their families to support attendance.

The school will ensure that there are emergency contact details for each pupil wherever possible to ensure the school has additional options for getting in touch with adults responsible for a pupil where the pupil is absent without notification or authorisation.

The school will ensure that parents are aware of their legal duty to ensure that their child attends school regularly and to facilitate their child's legal right to a full-time education – parents will be made aware that this means their child must attend school every day that it is open, save for in certain circumstances, e.g. sickness or absences that have been authorised by the headteacher in advance. The school will regularly inform parents about their child's levels of attendance, absence and punctuality, and will ensure that parents are aware of the benefits that regular attendance at school can have for their child educationally, socially and developmentally.

If a pattern of absence becomes problematic, the school will work collaboratively with the pupil and their parents to improve attendance by addressing the specific barriers that prevent the pupil from being able to attend school regularly. The school will always take into consideration the sensitivity of some of the reasons for pupil absence and will approach families to offer support rather than punitive approaches.

Where these barriers are related to the pupil's experience in school, the headteacher and any relevant school staff, e.g. the DSL and SENDCo, will work together to address this. Where the barriers are outside of the school's control, e.g. they are related to issues within the pupil's family, the headteacher will liaise

with any relevant external agencies or authorities, e.g. children's social care or the LA, and will encourage parents to access support that they may need.

15. Persistent absence (PA)

There are various groups of pupils who may be vulnerable to high absence and PA, such as:

- Children in need
- LAC
- Young carers
- Pupils who are eligible for FSM
- Pupils with EAL
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils who have faced bullying and/or discrimination

The school will use a number of methods to help support pupils at risk of persistent absence to attend school. These include:

- Meeting with pupils to discuss patterns of absence, barriers to attendance, and any other problems they may be having.
- Establishing plans to remove barriers and provide additional support.
- Having regular check-ins to review progress and the impact of support.
- Making regular contact with families to discuss progress.
- Assessing whether an EHC plan or IHP may be appropriate.
- Considering what support for re-engagement might be needed, including for vulnerable groups.
- Specific support from the school ELSA or Trauma Informed Schools Practitioner
- Working with staff, parents and pupils on the specific reasons for emotionally based school avoidance.

Where a pupil at risk of persistent absence is also at increased risk of harm, the school will work in conjunction with all relevant authorities, e.g. social services, to support the pupil in line with the school's duty of care. The school will also bear in mind that the continuation of severe persistent absence following intervention may, in itself, constitute neglect, and will escalate any concerns in this regard in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

16. Legal intervention

The school will allow sufficient time for attendance interventions and engagement strategies to improve pupils' attendance; however, where engagement strategies to improve attendance have not had the desired effect, the headteacher will consider:

- Holding a formal meeting with parents and a representative from the LA.
- Working with the LA to put a parenting contract or an education supervision order in place.
- Engaging children's social care where there are safeguarding concerns.

17. Monitoring and analysing absence

The administration officer responsible for attendance will monitor and analyse attendance data regularly to ensure that intervention is delivered quickly to address habitual absence at the first signs.

The school will collect data regarding punctuality and authorised and unauthorised absence, for:

- The school cohort as a whole.
- Individual year groups.
- Individual pupils.
- Demographic groups, e.g. pupils from different ethnic groups or economic backgrounds.
- Other groups of pupils, e.g. pupils with SEND, LAC and pupils eligible for FSM.
- Pupils at risk of persistent absence.

The attendance officer will conduct a thorough analysis of the above data on a regular basis to identify patterns and trends. This will include identifying, for each group:

- Patterns in uses of certain codes.
- Particular days of poor attendance.
- Historic trends of attendance and absence.
- Barriers to attendance.

The attendance officer will provide regular reports to staff across the school to enable them to track the attendance of pupils and to implement attendance procedures. The attendance officer will also be responsible for monitoring how attendance data changes in response to any interventions implemented to increase attendance in future.

The governing board will regularly review attendance data, including examinations of recent and historic trends, and will support the headteacher in setting goals and prioritising areas of focus for attendance support based on this data.

The school will also benchmark its attendance data against local, regional and national-level data to identify areas of success and areas for improvement, and will share practice which has been shown to be effective with other schools.

18. Notice to Improve and Penalty notices

Schools can request that the Local Authority issues a Penalty Notice (PN) for persistent and severe absenteeism, including for taking unauthorised term-time leave. The DfE provides national thresholds for the circumstances under which a PN should be considered by the school. These thresholds are set out in the DfE publication 'Working together to improve school attendance.' (para 176 to 185) Dorset Council can consider issuing a 'Notice to Improve', as per the DfE guidance, to provide parents with a final opportunity to engage with support before the issuing of a PN. 9.4 9.5 9.6 9.7 Penalty Notices are issued to each parent of each absent child, (for example 2 children and 2 parents, means each parent will receive 2 invoices – 4 in total).

First Leave of Absence offence: The Penalty Notice amount of £160 to be paid within 28 days, this is reduced to £80 each child if paid within 21 days.

Second Leave of Absence offence within a 3 year period (from the date of issue of the first penalty notice): The amount of £160 paid within 28 days. No reduced amount.

19. Training of staff

The school will recognise that early intervention can prevent poor attendance. As such, staff will receive training in identifying potentially at-risk pupils as part of their induction and refresher training.

The governing body will ensure that teachers and support staff receive training in line with this policy and that staff will receive regular and ongoing training as part of their development.

Training will cover at least the following:

- The importance of good attendance
- That absence is almost invariably a result of wider circumstances
- The legal requirements on schools, e.g. the keeping of registers
- The school's strategies and procedures for monitoring and improving attendance
- The school's procedures for multi-agency working to provide intensive support for pupils who need it

The school will provide dedicated and enhanced attendance training to the administration officer responsible for attendance and other staff with specific attendance functions in their role – this will include training regarding interpreting and analysing attendance data and supporting pupils to overcome barriers to attendance.

Staff will receive training to ensure they understand that increased absence from school could indicate a safeguarding concern and know how such concerns should be managed.

20. Monitoring and review

Attendance and punctuality will be monitored throughout the year.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Governing Body. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders.