Attendance policy

Broadmayne First School

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

- Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Acting early to ensure the safeguarding of children who are absent from school without explanation

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.

2. Legislation and guidance

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:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Education and Inspections Act 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2010
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2011
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013
- The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. School procedures

3.1 Attendance register

By law, all schools (except those where all pupils are boarders) are required to keep an attendance register, and all pupils must be placed on this register.

The attendance register will be taken at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

The school doors open at 8.45 am each day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 9a.m and will be kept open until 9.30 am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.05 pm.

3.2 Unplanned absence

Parents must notify the school on the first day of an unplanned absence – for example, if their child is unable to attend due to ill health – by 9am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 6).

Parents may contact the school by telephone on the school number, or by email to the school office.

Absence due to illness will be authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask parents to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents will be notified of this in advance.

3.3 Medical or dental appointments

Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.

However, we encourage parents to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

Parents may inform the school of appointments by telephone, letter to the school office or teacher, or email.

Applications for other types of absence in term time must also be made in advance. Information relating to whether the school can authorise such absences can be found in section 4.

3.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late but before the register has closed (9.30 am) will be marked as late, using the appropriate code.

A pupil who arrives after the register has closed (after 9.30 am)will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code.

The school monitors pupils who arrive late, as this is known to have a detrimental effect on children's learning. Periods of persistent lateness will result in a meeting with the school in the first instance, and families may be referred to the DASP Absence Panel if the issues cannot be resolved.

3.5 Following up absence

The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct attendance code to use.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for our ring back procedure.

3.6 Reporting to parents

We will report attendance to parents in the end of year report.4. Authorised and unauthorised absence

4.1 Granting approval for term-time absence

Broadmayne First School follows the local authority and DASP attendance guidelines, and the headteacher may not grant any leave of absence to pupils during term time unless they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments – as explained in sections 3.2 and 3.3
- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart
- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a Traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision
- Important family occasions, such as weddings

- Targeting Unauthorised Absence
- At Broadmayne we follow the DASP agreed attendance guidelines. Attendance is monitored daily, and if low attendance (below 92%) is identified the following actions will be taken, in this order:
    - A meeting will be held with the parents/carers of the child, to highlight the low attendance and discuss any issues and how they can be solved
    - A letter will be sent to parents advising them that their child's attendance has fallen below acceptable standards
    - Persistant low attendance will be referred to the DASP Attendance Panel, where a support package can be put in place

4.2 Legal sanctions

Schools can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a penalty notice, parents 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 or not to issue a penalty notice ultimately rests with the headteacher, following the local authority's code of conduct for issuing penalty notices. This may take into account:

- A 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 the parent or withdraw the notice.

5. Attendance monitoring

The office staff monitor pupil absence on a daily basis.

Parents are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 3.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above 5 days we will contact the parents to discuss the reasons for this.

If after contacting parents a pupil's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving an education welfare officer.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Pupil-level absence data is 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. We compare our attendance data to the national average, and share this with governors.

Broadmayne uses a secure system to collect and store attendance data. The data is used for internal purposes – for example to track the attendance of individual or groups of children.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented consistently across the school, and for monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors.

The headteacher also supports other staff in monitoring the attendance of individual pupils and issues fixed-penalty notices, where necessary.

7.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. They also pass on any letters or information to the office to be verified and recorded.

7.5 Office staff

Office staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system. They will also call parents whose child is absent without reason as per our ring back procedure.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed biannually by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our child protection policy.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment

R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2 Broadmayne First School

Safeguarding Children
Children missing education - Ring-back procedure

As part of our commitment to safeguarding children in our care, Broadmayne First School operates a ring-back policy in order to establish as far as possible, the safety of all children during school hours.

The following guidelines will be used to help establish where children are who have not been marked present in the register and where there has not been any message from parents/carers to explain their absence.

1. Registers should be marked by 9am using SIMS.
2. Any child arriving in school after 9am and not marked in the register should be sent by the class teacher/other adult in charge of the class/group to the school office in order to be marked in school but late.
3. Office staff will check all registers on SIMS. At 9:30am, the office will:
    1. Re-check any children that are marked absent and for whom an explanation for the absence has not been given. This includes checking with the class teacher to see if the child has arrived but has not presented themselves to the office as late.
    2. For those children still unaccounted for, the office staff will phone the parent/carer using the first given contact number from the school data sheets. If contact is made, office staff will ask for an explanation of the absence and remind the parent/carer of the need to make contact with the school office before 9am if their child is unable to be at school (for whatever reason).
    3. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted on the first given contact number, other given numbers will be used.
    4. If the parent/carer cannot be contacted on any of the given contact numbers, the alternative contacts will be tried.
    5. If by 10:00am there is no response from the parent/carer or any of the other given contacts, the DSL or deputy DSL will be informed
    6. The DSL will consider each absent child case by case. Action may include:

- If the child is not usually a child protection concern, the office staff will be asked to continue to try to contact the parent/carer throughout the day until contact is made.
- If the child is a child protection concern, has a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) or the family is already being supported by the Early Intervention Team or other agencies, these agencies will be contacted in order to establish reasons for the absence.

The above procedures are only guidelines and each absent child should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.