

Brookhurst Primary School



Attendance Policy

Policy reviewed by Gina Reynolds, September 2023

Policy to Governors for information

Policy to be reviewed - September 2024

Introduction

Attendance is everyone's responsibility. The law entitles every child of compulsory school age to an efficient, full-time education and it is the legal responsibility of every parent or guardian to make sure their child receives that education either by regular attendance to a school or by education otherwise than at a school. Brookhurst Primary School is committed to supporting our children and their parents to ensure that our students are able to access their education.

- 1.1 We expect all children on roll to attend every day, when the school is in session, as long as they are fit and healthy enough to do so. We do all we can to encourage the children to attend, and to put in place appropriate procedures. We believe that the most important factor in promoting good attendance is development of positive attitudes towards school. To this end, we strive to make our school a happy and rewarding experience for all children. We also recognise that parents have a vital role and there is a need to establish strong home-school links and communication systems.
- 1.2 Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 1995, the governing body are responsible for making sure the school keeps an attendance register that records which pupils are present at the start of both the morning and the afternoon sessions of the school day. This register will also indicate whether an absence was authorised or unauthorised.
- 1.3 High attendance levels are very often reflected in successful outcome and the school supports and encourages all children to aim for 100%.

General Procedures

Marking of registers is open from 8.55am and closes at 9.05am. Any child arriving after 9am will be marked as 'L' - late before registration closed. The number of minutes lates will also be recorded. Therefore, it is imperative that children are in school for 8.55am.

Any child arriving after 9.25am will be marked as U - later after registration closed, unless notification of a medical appointment has previously been given.

Punctuality issues will be followed up with parents or guardians.

Key Staff

Head Teacher - Angela Stanton
Deputy Head - Mark Huges

Family Support Worker & Attendance Lead - Gina Reynolds
School Business Manager - Nikki Ross
Attendance Governor - Ali Foster

2 Definitions

2.1 Authorised absence

- An absence is classified as authorised when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason and the school has received notification from a parent or guardian. For example, if a child has been unwell, the parent/guardian must e-mail / telephone the school / or use the app to explain the absence.
- Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents do not have this authority. Consequently, not all absences supported by parents will be classified as authorised. For example, if a parent takes a child out of school to go shopping during school hours, this will not mean it is an authorised absence.

2.2 Unauthorised absence

- An absence is classified as unauthorised when a child is away from school without the permission of both the school and a parent.
- Therefore, the absence is unauthorised if a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

2.3 Persistent Absence

- Where a student's attendance figure reaches 96% or below, they are deemed as 'persistently absent' from school.

2.4 Severely Absent

- Where a student to absent from school more that they are present therefore with an attendance figure of 50% or below, they are deemed as 'severely absent'.

3 If a child is absent

3.1 When a child is absent unexpectedly, the class teacher will record the absence in the register, the School Office/ Family Support Worker will then endeavour to contact a parent or guardian.

3.2 Parents or guardians are required to notify the school everyday of their child's absence.

3.3 An inadequate reason for absence will be queried by the school and a written record will be kept of the action.

3.4 A note may be sent to the school prior to the day of absence, e.g. if a child has a medical appointment. Where possible appointments should be made out of school

hours or in school holidays. However, we realise that this is sometimes not possible. Pupils should come into school before and after appointments to ensure that they miss as little lesson time as possible.

- 3.5 If there is any doubt about the whereabouts of a child, the class teacher should take immediate action by notifying the school office. The school will then be in contact straight away with the parent or guardian, in order to check on the safety of the child.
- 3.6 A safe and well check, as the name suggests, is where we check that a child is safe and well. There are a few reasons why the school may carry out a safe and well check. These include:

If a child is absent with no reason and contact has not been made with a parent or guardian on Day 3 or if a child has been absent for 10 days with contact from a parent or guardian then a check will be carried out. We have a duty of care to ensure that every child who attends Brookhurst Primary School is safe and well. If we have been unable to see the child during a safe and well check, we will carry out another. If more than one safe and well check have been unsuccessful, we will ask our PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) to carry out a check.

Urgent safe and well visits will be carried out on Day 1 for pupils known to be vulnerable.

4 Requests for leave of absence

- 4.1 The Government issued new regulations in September 2013 regarding Leave of Absence. The Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) Regulations 2006 as amended by Education (Pupil Regulations) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013.
- 4.2 Headteachers **shall not** grant **any** Leave of Absence during term time **unless they consider** there are **exceptional** circumstances relating to the application.
- 4.3 Parents **do not** have any entitlement to take their children on holiday during term time. Any application for leave must establish that there are **exceptional circumstances** and the headteacher must be satisfied that the circumstance warrants the granting of leave.
- 4.4 Headteachers will determine how many school days a child may be absent from school if the leave is granted.
- 4.5 The school can only consider applications for Leave of Absence which are made by the resident parent. i.e. the parent with whom the child normally resides.

- 4.6 Applications for Leave of Absence **must be made in advance** and failure to do so will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent by Fixed Penalty Notice.
- 4.7 Applications for Leave of Absence which are made in advance and refused will result in the absence being unauthorised which may result in legal action against the parent, by Fixed Penalty Notice, **if the child is absent from school during that period.**
- 4.8 If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued and is not paid within the timeframe set out in that Notice, the matter will be referred to Warwickshire County Council's Legal Services to consider instigating criminal prosecution proceedings under S444 of Education Act 1996.
- 4.9 Each application for a Leave of Absence will be considered individually, taking into account circumstances such as:
- The nature of the event for which leave is being sought
 - The frequency of the request
 - Whether advance notice has been given
 - The pupils attainment, attendance and ability to catch up missed schooling
- 4.9 If a child's attendance over the previous 20 weeks is less than 95% or a period of leave near to or coinciding with SATs, then authorisation is very unlikely to be granted.

5.0 Long-term absence

- 5.1 When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send material home, so that they can keep up with their school work.
- 5.2 If the absence is likely to continue for an extended period, or be a repetitive absence, the school will contact the support services, so that arrangements can be made for the child to be given some tuition outside school.

6.0 Repeated unauthorised absences

- 6.1 The school will contact the parent or guardian of any child who has an unauthorised absence. If a child has a repeated number of unauthorised absences, the parents or guardians will be asked to visit the school and discuss the problem. If the situation does not improve, the school will then contact the LA support services.

- 6.2 The governors, supported by the LA, reserve the right to consider taking legal action against any parents or guardians who repeatedly fail to accept their responsibility for sending their children to school on a regular basis.

7 Rewards for good attendance

- 7.1 Where attendance has improved over the term a pupil will receive a postcard from school congratulating them on their improved attendance.

8 Attendance targets

- 8.1 The school sets attendance targets each year. These are agreed by the senior staff and governors at the annual target-setting meeting. The targets are challenging yet realistic, and based on attendance figures achieved in previous years.

9 Monitoring and review

- 9.1 It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request a termly report from the head teacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.
- 9.2 The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.
- 9.3 The rates of attendance will be reported in the school prospectus, and in the annual school profile.
- 9.4 Class teachers will be responsible for monitoring attendance in their class and for following up absences in the appropriate way. If there is concern about a child's absence, they will contact the school office immediately. If there is a longer-term general worry about the attendance of a particular child, this will be reported to the head teacher, who will contact the parents or guardians.
- 9.5 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Brookhurst will try to improve and maintain good attendance.



98 - 100% Children are accessing all learning opportunities



96 - 97% Very few learning opportunities are missed



93 - 95% Risk of underachievement



90-92% High risk of underachievement



under 89% Severe risk of underachievement



less than 50% Extreme risk of underachievement