# Brookfields School

# Attendance Policy

Adopted: January 2020 Review date: January 2021

**Introduction:**

Regular school attendance is vital for all children. This point is stressed to all pupils and parents when they are first admitted to the school. We need them every pupil to be in school every day if we are to help them achieve their full potential. It is essential for our pupils to attend school every day in order to provide continuity, reinforcement and stimulation to assist their learning.

This Policy sets out the responsibility of the school and all those associated with the School in respect of Attendance and Punctuality.

**Principles**

The Academy Councillors and staff recognise that the maximising of good attendance is a key task for the School, if pupils are to take full advantage of opportunities at the School. The co-operation of all concerned, including parents/carers as well as school staff, is vital to ensure full attendance and good punctual timekeeping. By sustaining a culture in which full attendance and punctuality is the norm, the School will demonstrate to pupils, parents/carers and staff, the value placed by the School on full attendance and punctuality and encourage children to gain the full benefit from their primary education. Emphasis on attendance and punctuality also demonstrates the School's concern for individual children by contacting parents/carers to enquire about any unexplained absence.

**School Attendance and the Law**

Under the 1996 Education Act, parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children attend school regularly and punctually. Failure to do so could result in legal action being taken against them by the Local Authority.

The register is a legal document and schools must, under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 take a register at the start of the morning session, and again during the afternoon session. Since September 2006, schools have been required to use statutory registration codes. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006, only the school (and not parents/carers) can authorise an absence. Where the reason for a pupil's absence cannot be established at the time the register is taken, that absence shall be recorded as unauthorised. If a reason for absence is provided by the parent/carer, the school may decide to grant leave of absence which must be recorded as authorised using the appropriate national code.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2013 have removed all references to family holidays and leave of absence shall not be granted unless an application had been made in advance and the headteacher considers that leave of absence should be granted due to exceptional circumstances. Headteachers no longer have the discretion to authorise up to ten days of absence. This discretion has been removed by the aforementioned Regulations (2013). Requests must be made on the School's official 'Absence Request Form', which is available from school.

Where a family chooses to take a holiday during term time, the absence will be coded as authorised if permission has been granted following a Leave of Absence request form being completed. If leave of absence is taken without the request having been agreed, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. This may result in the Local Authority issuing a Penalty Notice, (£120 per parent, per child / £60 if paid within 21 days), where there have been 10 sessions

or more of unauthorised absence recorded. If this penalty is not paid the Local Authority will instigate legal proceedings against the parent/carer in the Magistrates Court. In compliance with the Education Act 436A (Chapter 2 Part 6) the school will, after making appropriate checks, report all Children Missing from Education to the Local Authority, who has a duty to investigate the whereabouts of such children and negotiate their prompt return to suitable education.

## Roles Responsibilities and Procedures

### Academy Council

It will be the responsibility of the Academy Council to oversee and monitor the working of the Attendance Policy.

### Headteacher

It will be the responsibility of the Headteacher to:

- Initiate and monitor procedures for monitoring attendance/lateness.
- Ensure all unexplained absences are investigated on the day they occur, or as soon as possible after the absence.
- Monitor attendance and lateness on a regular basis and report to Academy Council on the progress.
- Keep staff and children informed of the progress of policy and practice
- In our regular Newsletters remind parents of the importance of good attendance

### Family Support Worker

It will be the responsibility of the Family Support Worker to:

- Liaise with the school office and Headteacher in regards to attendance issues
- Support families with improving attendance (through meetings, home visits, CAF etc)

### Class Teacher

It will be the responsibility of the Class Teacher to:

- Encourage attendance/punctuality by creating a welcoming and stimulating atmosphere.
- Keep daily registers and ensure that parents' letters/messages are passed onto the Office Staff as soon as possible.

### School Office Staff

It is the responsibility of Office Staff to:

- Follow up all unexplained absence/lateness after 9:30am ~ Phone call and text (to request call back)
- Liaise with the Family Support Worker
- Inform the Headteacher of unexplained absence/lateness
- Enter attendance details onto the school MIS system and produce reports as necessary

### Parents/carers

It is the responsibility of Parents/Carers to:

- Ensure full and punctual attendance at school when the child is fit to attend thereby instilling good attendance habits.
- Comply with the School's procedures for reporting absence/lateness
- Inform the school of reasons for non-attendance before 9.30 am on the first day of absence by telephone call. If any child is to arrive late in school, parents should contact the school office as soon as possible
- When the child does arrive late, the parent/carer must accompany the child to the School Office to sign their child in.

- Where a child appears to be having an unacceptable level of absence due to medical reasons, the school may request that medical evidence (such as appointment cards or prescribed medication) be provided to cover all absences. Failure on the part of the parent to provide such medical evidence, will result in absences being recorded as unauthorised and referral to the Education Welfare Service will be considered.

**Pupils**

- Children are expected to attend regularly and to be on time for the school day starting.

## Procedures

It is accepted that on occasions it is not possible for a child to attend school, in which case:

- It is the responsibility of the parent/carer to seek authorisation for the absence or to provide an explanation for the absence by way of a telephone call to the School Office.
- If the School does not receive prior notification or subsequent explanation for the absence, then the School will contact the parents to ascertain the reason; by telephone and via text as appropriate
- If no contact can be made then a home visit will be undertaken to identify that the child is safe
- Only the Headteacher or Senior Management Team may give approval for absence.
- The parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from school at any time.
- Parents should provide an explanation for absence as soon as possible, with parental contact being made with School before 9.30 am on the first day of absence, providing further information by letter or telephone as necessary
- Messages passed via transport staff will not be accepted and will be followed up by a telephone call
- No child is to leave the school building unless they have permission from the Headteacher or Senior member of staff if the Headteacher is out. If a child becomes ill at school this must be reported to the Headteacher or senior member of staff if the Headteacher is out. The Headteacher or Senior member of staff will decide whether the child is too ill to remain in school.

## Persistent Absence

- Pupil absence is monitored on a monthly basis, highlighting those whose attendance falls below 95%. For those below 95%, a letter will be sent to the parents to inform them that their child's absence is causing concern.

- If attendance falls below 90%, parents will be asked into school to discuss the issue.

## Rewards/Celebrations

At the end of every term, 100% attendance will be celebrated by the presentation of Certificates.

## Procedure for if a child cannot attend school because of health needs

In such a circumstance the school would work closely with the local authority and other relevant health agencies following the DfE guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-for-children-with-health-needs-who-cannot-attend-school

## Evaluation and Review

This Policy will be reviewed bi- annually, and will be promoted throughout the school community and shared with outside agencies and partners as required.

Review Date: January 2022

## Related Documents

- Leave of Absence Request Form (available from the school office or on the school website)