Brabourne CE Primary School
Attendance Policy – March 2020

This policy has been prepared with the Christian Values of responsibility foremost – this is a core value of the school and all members of the school community aspire to live by it daily. Parents have a responsibility to ensure their children attend school. Staff and governors have a responsibility to ensure pupils are keen to attend and they address attendance issues appropriately. Brabourne CEP School is committed to the continuous raising of achievement of all our pupils. Regular attendance is critical if our pupils are to be successful and benefit from the opportunities presented to them.

1. Introduction

Your child should always attend school regularly during **term times**. There are only two real exceptions to this:

- When your child is too ill to go to school
- When the school has authorised your child to be absent
- Children should not return within 48 hours of sickness

2. Illness

If your child is too ill to attend school, you should always call the school to let them know by 9:15am. If your child has missed more than five days of school due to illness, evidence that you have sought medical advice will be requested by the school. If your child continues to be absent, a doctor's note should be provided for each week of absence. If this is not provided, the child's absence will be recorded as unauthorised which may lead to the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer. This information helps the school ensure a child's wellbeing by checking they are receiving medical intervention during an extended absence.

3. Authorised absences from school

Any time you are planning to take your child out of school during term time, you need to ask the school headteacher to give permission for you to do so. These are some examples of situations the headteacher might consider good reasons for your child to be out of school:

- Family bereavement
- Medical appointments
- Year 6 pupils visiting prospective secondary schools

It is always the school's decision whether or not to allow you to take your child out of school **during term time**. If you do not ask permission, or we do not give it and you take your child out of school anyway, this will be recorded as an **unauthorised absence** and you may be referred to the Local Authority Educational Welfare Officer.

4. Request for authorised absence

Any requests for authorised absence must be sought from the Headetacher, preferably in writing, and ideally at least two weeks in advance. The headteacher and Chair of Governors are not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. Decisions on whether absence will be authorised will be based on each individual case but all requests will be dealt with fairly and consistently.

5. Unauthorised absences from school

These are some examples of situations which we will **not** consider a good reason for your child to be out of school:

- Shopping trips
- Waiting in for a delivery
- Family birthdays or celebrations
- Visits from relatives
- Family outings
- Not having the correct school uniform
- Family holidays

Parents often assume that they are automatically allowed to take their child out of school (especially during the last weeks of term) for a pre-booked family holiday. **This isn't true**. From September 2013, DfE regulatiions state that headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Our school will not authorise any absence during term time other than on compassionate grounds, medical grounds or exceptional cases, for example to enable gifted and talented pupils to receive specific experiences beyond that which the school can provide.

6. Being late for school

It is important that your child gets to school by 9am. The start of the first lesson is usually the most important time of the day for your child's learning. Registration will close at 9.05am and 1.05pm (for juniors) / 1.20pm (for infants). Frequent lateness will result in the following measures:

- 10 instances (over a school year) – Warning letter from the Headteacher
- 20 instances (over a school year) – Warning letter from the Chair of Governors
- 30 instances (over a school year) – Case will be referred to the Education Welfare Officer

7. If your child is absent from school too often

If the school feels that your child isn't attending properly because:

- Their attendance is below 80% without justifiable reason
- Persistent unauthorised absences

we will inform the Local Authority who may ask an Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to investigate what is happening. This could lead to the issue of penalty notices to parents of children who are not attending school regularly or persistent lateness after the register has closed. The penalty is £60 per parent per child, rising to £120 if not paid within 28 days. If a penalty fine is not paid, it will lead to prosecution by the Local Education Authority.

8. Children Missing Education

No child should be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Headteacher and the Inclusion and Attendance Service when appropriate. Please see the circumstances below:-

Where a child is missing from education, Local Authority guidance will be followed, by completing a Child Missing Education referral for the following circumstances:-

- If the whereabouts of the child is unknown and the school has failed to locate him/her.
- The family has notified the school that they are leaving the area but no Common Transfer Form (pupil file) has been requested by another school.

9 Reports

A pupil's attendance will be reported to parents three times a year through the two interim reports and the final year reports at the end of the academic year.

10 Monitoring the policy

The headteacher and the Governors will review this policy every two years. The headteacher will report attendance figures to the Governing Body at each meeting.