



Brabourne CE Primary School

Attendance Policy – May 2022

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

2. Parental responsibility

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them in order to make good progress in their learning. Poor attendance undermines their educational attainment and progress and, sometimes, puts pupils at risk by encouraging anti-social behaviour.

It is the parents' responsibility to contact the school on the first day their child is absent. This is a safeguarding issue requirement so that all parties know that your child is safe and their whereabouts is known. Parents should regularly update the school and inform the school when their child is returning.

Pupils are expected to arrive by 9am. All pupils that arrive late must report, with their parent to the school office where the reason for lateness is recorded.

3. 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 Inclusion and Attendance Service. This information helps the school ensure a child's wellbeing by checking they are receiving medical intervention during an extended absence.

4. Authorised absences from school

Any time you are planning to take your child out of school during term time, you need to ask the Headteacher to give permission for you to do so. Only the Headteacher can authorise absence using a consistent approach. The Headteacher is not obliged to accept a parent's explanation. 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.

The Headteacher may authorise absence in "exceptional circumstances" but this must be requested in advance and agreement to each request is at the discretion of the Headteacher, acting on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its merits and the Headteacher's decision is final. Once the decision not to authorise leave is taken, it cannot be authorised retrospectively.

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 Inclusion and Attendance Service.

Any requests for authorised absence must be sought from the Headteacher, 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

The following reasons are examples of absence that will not be authorised:

- Persistent nonspecific illness e.g. poorly/unwell
- Absence of siblings if one child is ill
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons
- Child's/family birthday
- Shopping trip
- Family Holidays (with some rare exceptions)

Persistent unauthorised absence (10% or more of the school year) may result in an AS1 referral to the Local Authority School Liaison Officer (see section 8). The school will follow procedures prior to referral and parents will be notified in writing.

Local Authority Action may include:-

- Attendance Improvement Meeting
- Home visits
- Liaison with other agencies
- Fast Track to Prosecution

Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 says that parents are guilty of an offence of failing to secure regular attendance at school unless they can prove that the child was absent:

- with leave (the school has given permission)
- due to sickness or any unavoidable cause (the sickness or unavoidable cause must relate to the child, not the parent)
- religious observance
- failure by the Local Authority to provide transport

In law, these are the only acceptable reasons for a child being absent from school.

6. Being late for school

At Brabourne CEP School the register is taken at 9.05 am. Pupils arriving after these times must enter school by the main entrance and report to Reception where their name and the reason for lateness will be recorded.

The register will close at 9.15am. Pupils arriving after the register has closed can be marked as late (Code L).

Frequent lateness after the register has closed will be discussed with parents and could provide grounds for a referral to the Inclusion and Attendance Service.

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 Inclusion and Attendance Service.

7. Timeline of the Staged Approach for Managing Poor Attendance

- 90 - 95% attendance – the class teacher to investigate and notify the Headteacher of concerns. Headteacher to contact parent if appropriate.
- 85 - 90% attendance - school intervention letters/meeting with parents

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 Inclusion and Attendance Service to investigate what is happening.

- the school will make a referral to the KCC Inclusion and Attendance Service using the Digital Front Door. If it is not clear a referral to the Service is appropriate, the school will consult with the Local Authority School Liaison Officer for advice.
- For the cases that require intensive family support, the school may make an Early Help Notification.

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 throughout the year, through interim reports, parent consultation evenings 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.

Appendix 1

Kent School Referral Pathway – Pupil Attendance

