



Attendance Policy

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ATTENDANCE POLICY

The amendments made to the Policy take account of the DfE statutory guidance on school attendance.

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1. Introduction

It is the right of every pupil to receive a full-time education.

Central to raising standards in education and ensuring all pupils can fulfil their potential is an assumption so widely understood that it is insufficiently stated – pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education.

Absence disturbs the continuity of the curriculum and affects social relationships. Absence from school causes difficulties for teachers who have to respond by providing individual programs of work, which whilst supporting continuity are no substitute for attendance at school.

The government expects:

Schools and Local authorities to:

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence, which includes all children with an attendance less than 90%
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled; and,
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly.
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons

In considering the above Brackenfield School have adopted and implemented a traffic light attendance monitoring system for attendance (see appendix 1) and that all absence from school will be subject to this system and the attendance policy.

2. The Law

The law that governs school attendance and the duties that govern school attendance and explains how they apply to local authorities', head teachers, school staff, governing bodies, pupils and parents.

These requirements are contained in:

- The Education Act 1996 - sections 434 (1)(3)(4)&(6) and 458(4)&(5)
- 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
- Working together to improve school attendance 2022

In brief, parents/carers have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive “efficient full-time education” which is suitable for their “age, ability, aptitude” and “special needs.”

3. Leave of Absence and Holidays.

Under education law parents/carers may request a leave of absence for pupils from school. However, the education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) regulations 2013, makes it clear that head teachers should not grant approval for any leave of absence during term time unless exceptional circumstances exist. A clear, written justification for these occasions should be provided by the parent or carer along with the reasons why the absence needs to take place in term time and over the time requested. (*DFE Schools Attendance, Guidance for Maintained Schools, Academies, Independent Schools and LA's, September 2020*)

Term times are for education. This is priority. Children have 175 days off school to spend time with their families and for family holidays, celebrating birthdays, visiting family members, traveling to an event, etc. These are not considered exceptional circumstances and as such will not be an authorised absence.

Every application will be considered individually, and the decision to authorise absence is at the head teacher's discretion based on their assessment of the situation.

If the leave of absence is not authorised, it will be marked on the attendance register as unauthorised absence and will be dealt with in line with our traffic light system and policy.

Warning Letters and Penalty Notice Fines may be issued as follows:

4. Persistent Absence

The school can refer to Derbyshire County Council for investigation/ legal intervention if the absence meets the following criteria;

- Two consecutive weeks of unauthorised absence
- Secondary school age – 10 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 5-week period
- Primary school age – 5 sessions of unauthorised absence in a 5-week period, or 10 sessions of authorised absence in a 5-week period where no medical evidence has been received.
- Persistent absence threshold met within the last 12 months and where there is some current unauthorised absence.

5. Holidays During School Term Time

If the school has evidence that a parent has removed a child from school for the purposes of a holiday during term time without authorisation and the level of absence is in excess of the guidelines detailed in section 4, persistent absence, then the school can request the Local Authority to issue Penalty Notices to each parent for each child to whom unauthorised absence applies. The education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) regulations 2013 states that holidays cannot be authorized retrospectively. Any request should be made to the school in writing for consideration prior to any holiday/leave arrangements being made. You may be issued with a penalty notice should leave be taken which is not authorised. If unpaid this could lead to prosecution under section 444(1) of The Education Act 1996.

6. Medical Appointments and Operations

Where a request for authorised absence is made on medical grounds for pupils to attend non-routine appointments the school will request that parents/carers provide written confirmation before the authorisation is confirmed. It is also requested that every effort is made that the pupils only misses the AM or the PM session from school where possible. Every effort must be made by the parent/carer to bring the pupil back into school after the appointment. It is also preferred that appointments for medical reasons are made at the beginning or the end of the school day, where possible, to limit the time absent from school.

7. Procedures

School starts at 9.10. All children must be in school at this time.

Registers are to be completed by **teachers** during morning registration 9.10 – 9.30 a.m. and in the afternoon between 12.10pm and 12.20pm

THIS IS A LEGAL REQUIREMENT.

Parents/carers are required to notify the school of any absence by phone between 8 and 9.00am, on every day of absence. An answer phone service is available to leave a message on if the call is not answered. A reason must be provided for the absence, for example, he/she is poorly will not be accepted and the attendance manager will need to determine the reason for the absence. This information will be input on the pupil's communication log on the schools MIS with the reason for the absence detailed.

If there is a planned absence, for example medical appointments, parent should email attendance@brackenfield.derbyshire.sch.uk with the evidence for the appointment.

1. If a pupil is not present in registration (between 9.10 and 9.30am) and where no authorised reason for their absence has been provided they are to be marked as "N" and are required to go to the school's office on arrival to notify school of their arrival where their mark will be changed to "U".

2. A late mark, (L) is recorded in the register for any pupil arriving on site between 9.10am and 9.30am. After 9.30am, and if no authorised reason for being late has been provided, the U code (arrived in school after registers closed) will be recorded on the register for that session.

4. Where no contact has been made by the parents/carers, before 9.30am on the same day as the absence (it is essential to check whether the child is actually in the school). The attendance manager will call home.

5. Where there is no response to the phone call, further phone calls will be made or a home visit carried out. If we cannot ascertain that the pupil is safe and well, we will refer to social care.

6. In the case of long-term unauthorised absence (more than 5 days) we will carry out daily safe and well checks, either in person or over video call. If we cannot ascertain that the pupil is safe and well, we will refer to social care.

7. In the case of any prolonged authorised absence from school (more than 5 days) reasonable measures will be taken to ensure that the pupil is safe and well.

8. Where pupils are educated off-site for part of their week their attendance will be monitored on a daily basis by the office. The off-site facility will inform the school each day of attendance and the attendance will be updated on the schools MIS accordingly.

9. All pupils' attendance will be checked on a weekly basis, so that any patterns of absence or unusual absence is identified and early intervention and support, if required, can be offered to the parents/carers.

10. At the end of every Half Term each pupil's attendance will be checked and a monitoring report created, where each pupil will be placed into a category, as per the traffic light system and any action taken as necessary.

11. Details of a child/children's attendance will be provided to all parents three times per year through the school report.

12. Where a child attendance is causing concern the school will make contact with parents detailing any further action as per our traffic light system which may be taken as a result.

All attendance related correspondence and action is detailed on the schools MIS and the attendance monitoring spreadsheet.

Any written notes in children's home school diary's, concerning absence or medical appointments, must be transferred onto the schools MIS communication log by the class teacher.

8. Recognition System

Brackenfield School recognizes that pupils should be recognised for their attendance, and this is achieved in the following way;

An recognition system is in place to recognise each child's attendance achievement at the end of every Half Term. This is reported to parents via BOOP.

At the end of the academic year, every pupil with 100% attendance will receive a certificate as recognition. Any pupil, who has an 'M' (which is for a specialist appointment, that cannot be rearranged) or an 'I' (for an operation) on the register, will be included in this recognition. No pupil will be at a disadvantage because of their medical needs.

Appendix 1

Percentage Attendance to Date	Possible Action
100% - Excellent	None required. Boop report awarded to celebrate achievement at the end of every Half term.
96%-99% Good	School on-going monitoring.
90%-95% Cause for Concern	Pastoral Team to look at causes for Absences, and contact parents where absences are authorised or unusual, Attendance report provided to parent/carer.
85%-89% Cause for Concern	The pastoral team will contact parents and arrange a meeting to discuss attendance. Attendance report provided to parent/carer. Barriers to attendance identified and target set for remedial action. Email to parents about attendance letting them know their child's attendance is being monitored. Parental meeting offered where attendance does not improve in the half term monitoring, look at barriers, and set out urgent remedial action needed, including discussion on action if targets not met. Placement needs looked at. 121 work with the pupil around importance of attendance, where appropriate
89-80% and Below – Serious Cause for Concern	Parents to be informed via letter of monitoring, a specific monitoring period will be set for attendance to improve, this will be 15 school days the pastoral team will monitor . Reasons for absence discussed and decision over external service referral/action made. Daily monitoring from school and home visits/follow up as required. 121 work with the pupils, in the classroom, around the importance of attendance and coming to school where appropriate. Referral to specialist support services. Referral to Derbyshire County Council for consideration of legal intervention