



The
Brook on
Broadwaters

**School
Attendance
Policy**

Date of Policy.....
Date for Review.....
Date agreed by Governors....

Aims for School Attendance:

Consistency of approach to education is paramount to meet the needs of pupils. It is a Safeguarding procedure to ensure that all children are in school and we know their whereabouts if they are not. In order to gain that consistency of approach to safeguarding, maximising and prioritising the overall attendance of pupils at the school is essential. In order to do this Governors and staff will:

- Provide a welcoming and safe environment, where all members of the school community are valued
- Ensure that all school staff work with pupils and their families to enable regular school attendance and punctuality
- Establish a range of effective strategies to support and challenge those few parents and carers, who give low priority to attendance and punctuality
- Establish an effective and efficient system of communication with parents, carers and appropriate agencies to provide information, advice and support
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of the DFE guidance relating to holidays taken in term time, and to reduce the impact of holidays taken in term time on their children's education
- Understanding that, for some pupils, their condition means frequent, unavoidable absence through illness or medical appointments
- Recognise that the needs of individual pupils may require considerable planning following significant periods of absence
- Develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data, to address any issues which become apparent eg poor attendance of individuals or particular groups in school
- Promote effective, supportive partnerships with the Education Welfare Service and with other services and agencies

Timing of the School Day/Transport

The school day runs from 9am until 3.30pm. Most of the pupils are bussed in on LA transport. Times for collection and return home are set with the transport department. Parents/carers should ring the transport department if they have any queries or if their child is not to be picked up on a particular day. They must also ring when their child is ready to return to school. Please do this the day before your child returns.

Notifying the School of Absences

- Parents/carers should ring the school in any case of absence for their child. If they do not, they should expect the school to ring to find out the reason for absence. The telephone call will be made by one of the administrative officers, class teacher or the school nurse on the first day of absence. The school will make regular follow up calls in the case of prolonged absence. We always try to use our school interpreters for our Turkish parents/carers.
- The school will be responsible for informing parents/carers of the dates of school holidays and training days and will give at least 1 month's notice if the dates of training days have to change.

Telephone numbers: 020 8808 7120

Transport:

Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

The following activities may be considered as authorised absence:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments – parents and carers are always encouraged to make appointments out of school time but, for pupils from The Brook we do realise that often that is impossible.
- Days of religious observance
- Exclusion, whether fixed term or permanent should be regarded as authorised absence. The school is responsible for setting work for the pupil and exclusion cannot exceed more than 45 days in any school year. Exclusions rarely happen at The Brook.
- Schools have discretion to authorise absence in certain circumstances such as domestic emergency or bereavements and will consider each individual case separately.
- Where a pupil has frequent absences, the school will ask for evidence such as a medical certificate, appointment card or contact the GP (with parental consent) to confirm that there are medical grounds for absence.

The following activities are considered as unauthorised absence:

- Lateness after closure of registers
- Contact unable to be established with parents/carers
- Family holidays in term time – there is no parental right to take children on holiday during term time. If you do so one or more of the following may result:
 - Your child may lose their school place. Should this happen, you must re-apply for a school place. There is no guarantee that it would be at this school.
 - You may incur a Fixed Penalty Notice. This is a £50 penalty, payable within 28 days, and issued as a result of your child being absent for unauthorised reasons. Should the penalty not be paid within 28 days, it will increase to £100. Should this not be paid, you may be prosecuted.
 - You may be prosecuted in court by the local authority, in accordance with section 444 of the 1996 Education Act, for failing to secure your child's regular attendance at school.

Analysis of the data for absences

This is compiled on a half termly basis and included in the Governors Report from the Head Teacher. It can prove very useful in tracking individual pupils' absence rates, especially those who have short but regular periods of absence. The Governors and the Head teacher are required by the DFE to set attendance targets on an annual basis for authorised and unauthorised absences. Our targets fall in line with the national targets for schools with pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties, severe learning difficulties and autism and we do understand that the figures are necessarily different from mainstream schools. Our attendance, however, has much improved over the last few years and our expectations from parents/carers are high! Attendance is measured regularly by the Head Teacher, the Education Welfare Officer and our Attendance Officer, Felicia Rock. If the school has concerns either they or the Education Welfare Officer, Wajeeha Amin, we will also call meetings to find out what sort of support the family needs in order to get their child to school regularly.

Attendance Registers

- Registers are important legal documents and are kept secure within the schools SIMS data system.
- Schools are required to take the attendance register twice a day – at the start of the morning session and during the afternoon session.
- Schools must distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absence and the categories within those types of absence eg sickness/medical appointments/school closure/education visits
- Authorised absence is where the school has given approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away from school or has accepted an explanation after the event as a satisfactory reason for absence
- All other absences must be treated as unauthorised
- It is the school, not the parents/carers, which authorises absence

Traveller Pupils

As with all other pupils, the school will aim for full attendance but if parents/carers inform the school that the family will be travelling, and intend to return at a given time, the school may keep the child's place open for them and the record of absence will be authorised.

Referral to the Education Welfare Service

Where the action taken by the school has not improved the attendance of particular pupils, the school will refer to the Education Welfare Service, who will support the family and the school in ensuring the pupils' attendance. We could do this under the following circumstances:

- Of any child subject to a Child Protection Plan after 5 consecutive days of unauthorised absence or when the designated teacher has any concern at all about the reasons given by the parent/carer for absence, or immediately if the situation warrants it.
- For any pupils with below 85% attendance where at least some of this is unauthorised
- After 15 sessions of authorised absence in a five week period that is not supported by medical evidence.
- After 5 consecutive days of unauthorised absence in the case of LAC children
- When a pupil fails to return following a fixed term exclusion of more than five days
- After 15 incidents of lateness (after closure of register) in a five week period
- Where a pupil fails to return to school after holiday in term time and the school has failed to ascertain the whereabouts of the pupil in the 10 days immediately following their due return date

Health and Safety Guidelines on attendance when your child is unwell are attached as are the forms for application for holidays in term time.

If you have any queries about this document and attendance please contact the Head Teacher at any time or Felicia Rock, our Attendance Officer.



HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS/CARERS

WHEN YOUR CHILD IS UNWELL:

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, we are responsible for the health and safety of all our employees and everyone else on the premises. We have therefore added to our Health and Safety Policy the following guidelines. They were agreed by Governors way back in February 1998 but updated regularly since.

Please do not send your child to school if:

- He/ she has a temperature
- Has diarrhoea or has had diarrhoea during the previous two days
- Has been very ill during the night
- Is simply feeling very under the weather eg very irritable, crying and not his/her usual self.

This is because:

- School is a learning environment and children who are unwell or under the weather cannot learn
- Children who are unwell need a lot of carer and attention from staff which takes that attention away from the rest of the class group with possible safety risks for the whole group
- Our more vulnerable youngsters will be unnecessarily exposed to more infections

If your child becomes unwell at school:

- The school nurse will see them
- If the school nurse, in consultation with senior and class staff, thinks that the child is not well enough to be in school, we will phone parents/carers in order for the child to be collected by parents/carers
- Dependent on the nature of the illness we will advise you to take your child to the GP/that you keep them at home for a certain amount of time and ring the school before sending the child back in
- Can you please make sure that we have an up to date contact number for you – it can become really dangerous for the children if we cannot contact parents/carers in an emergency.
- You will also need to phone transport when your child is ready to come back to school

If your child receives intermittent doses of laxatives please inform the school (school nurse) when these have been given so that the class are prepared for the result.

We know how important it is for you to have your child in school – we feel exactly the same way - but if they are really not well, they should be at home. Many thanks for your understanding.

PLEASE RING THE HEAD TEACHER IF YOU HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH THIS PROCEDURE

