

Attendance Policy

Date Adopted: 1st March 2018

Date due for Review:

School/LEA Policy: School

Author: Mrs Tomlinson and Mrs Gresswell

Signed:



Chair of Governors

Policy Amendments

Date agreed at Governors	Amendment presented by	Amendment Location	Signed by Chair of Governors
13 th November 2014	J Gresswell	Change from 90% to 94% and times for pupils under lateness	
2 nd September 2015	J Gresswell	Lateness changed to 95% and time to be in school noted as 8.45am throughout	
1 st March 2018	J Gresswell	- Rational updated to include what the Government expects of LA, schools and parents - Roles and Responsibilities to include the laws surrounding attendance and the responsibilities of Parents/Carers in regards to illness and medical appointments - Monitoring Attendance changed from 10 days to 7 days - EIS procedures put into table - "The Governors receive a termly report on attendance in the HT report to full governors" - HT permission to "un-authorise" any authorised absence and parents responsibility to inform school about any health concerns - Term time holidays must be exceptional circumstances - Leave taken without authorisation cannot be authorised after return -Terms and consequences of an EIS referral -Responsibilities of the EIS, HT and Governing Body -Roles/Responsibilities of Parents/Carers replaced -'School Management' changed to School Leadership -How BPPS promotes good attendance removed -Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 removed -Approved educational activities removed	

Rational

“Regular attendance at school is crucial in raising standards of education and in ensuring every child can meet their full potential. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.”

The government expects:

- Schools and Local Authorities to-
 - Reduce absence including persistent absence
 - Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
 - Act early to address any patterns of absence
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend early and ensure that all pupils are punctual to their lessons and attend school regularly.

Department for Education- Advice on School Attendance July 2017 (www.education.gov.uk)

Procedures

Registration

- Start of the register is opened and closed at the following times:

	Year group	Open	Closed
am	All years	08.55	09.05
pm	All years	13.00	13.10

The time to arrive at school is 8.45am so that the children are ready for registration. In circumstances such as bad weather or public transport difficulties, the Headteacher may decide to keep the register open for a longer period.

- It is the responsibility of the Class Teacher/Teaching Assistant to ensure that the pupil is recorded as present (/) or absent (O).
- The data is normally entered onto the school system during the times above. When technical difficulties arise then a hard copy must be made and given to our attendance officer so the data can be transferred as soon as possible using an alternative PC.

Lateness

- Pupils who arrive after the registration period, but prior to the register being closed, are recorded L (late before registers closed). Statistical meaning = Present.
- Pupils who arrive after the register is closed, are recorded U (late after registers closed). Statistical meaning = Unauthorised absence/Late.
- Late pupils are to sign the late book which is in the school office. The attendance officer daily checks the late book to ensure accuracy of the registers.

- O codes need to be turned into (either L or U) as soon as possible.
- In the event of an emergency/fire 'the late book' must be taken onto the playground as soon as possible by administration staff to account for any latecomers.
- When a child has arrived late to school 5 times at any point during the school year, the privilege of the late mark will be removed and any subsequent late arrivals will be marked as unauthorised. A letter will be sent to the parent/carer confirming this.

Registration Codes

The Bromley Pensnett Primary School uses the Registration Codes as found in the DfE absence guidelines see below.

Amending register codes

The Attendance Officer has responsibility for monitoring the processing of explanations (notes), amending registers and checking these codes. The attendance officer is expected to chase up absences, account for the notes and messages, and maintain an up to date register. The Attendance Officer is responsible for amending any register codes.

Roles and Responsibilities

What the law says about School Attendance

All children of compulsory school age (between 5 and 16) must receive a full-time education. Section 444 (1a) of the Education Act 1966 says: *"If a child is of compulsory school age, who is a registered at a school, fails to attend regularly, without reasonable justification, then his/her parent is guilty of an offence and can be prosecuted"*.

Children are required to attend school for 190 days (380 sessions) in any single academic year (September-July).

The school expects all children to attend every day that the school is open and on time for registration. Attendance that falls below 90% is categorised by the Government as persistent absence.

Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Parents and Carers must ensure that their child is able to attend school for the whole academic year by ensuring their child attends school unless there is a reason for the absence, which has been approved by the school.

a) Illness:

If a parent or carer considers their child has an illness, which may warrant them remaining at home, then they must consider first of all whether they feel that their child would still be able to take part in the majority, if not all, of the school's activities. In this case, they should still send their child to school. Should the child become unwell during the day and/or if the school feels that they are no longer able to participate in school activities, the school will contact parents to collect their child.

If parents feel that their child cannot take part in the school's activities and would be better remaining at home then they must contact the school as soon as possible on the first day and any subsequent days of absence before 9.30am. Failure to do so constitutes a breach of this policy. The person ringing will be asked to identify themselves and clearly give the reason for the absence. This information will be recorded.

b) Medical Appointments:

Medical appointments must be made out of school time wherever possible.

If a child has a medical appointment then parents/carers must contact the school prior to the appointment to ask for approved arrangements for the child to be collected/returned to school as close to the appointment time as possible. A copy of the appointment time/letter will be requested.

Class Teacher/Teaching Assistants

- To keep an accurate attendance register
- To praise pupils for good attendance and punctuality
- To inform attendance officer when absence is impacting on achievement or is giving cause for concern.

School Leadership Team

- Attendance officer's responsibility for the strategic management of the attendance agenda and for reporting absence to the Local Authority.
- Intervene early when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern
- Develop a multi-agency response to the attendance agenda
- Utilise the support of available specialists in relation to the attendance agenda.
- Home visits may be made by the Attendance Officer without prior notification if a child is absent from school or persistently arriving late.

Early Intervention- Good Practice

- The Headteacher has assigned an attendance officer to assist with the improvement of attendance at The Bromley Pensnett Primary School.
- The attendance officer should ensure that first day contact with parent/carer for all pupils absent without reason (e.g. telephone, email, text) is achieved to minimise absences.
- The attendance officer will produce a weekly attendance data printout for allocating rewards.
- The school and Parent/Carers will work in partnership to help improve attendance. This may include signposting and working with other agencies

Monitoring Individual Pupils with Poor Attendance

- Children whose attendance is a cause for concern are targeted through follow-up telephone calls, Attendance Clinics and home visits.
- Individual summary sheets and Analysis of data trends is undertaken by the Attendance officer.
- Communication with parents is made by phone/letter/home visit. Progress is monitored and reviewed.
- Attendance clinics will be implemented for the attendance officer to meet with pupils or pupils and parents/carers, where advice and agreed strategies for improved attendance are discussed and agreed.
- Children with attendance less than 95% for the previous school year, will not have any absences or late arrivals to school authorised for the following year, without medical evidence. Parent/carers will receive confirmation of this by letter at the beginning of the new school year. Medical evidence may

be in the form of medication prescribed by a doctor or a doctor's prescription being bought into school.

- At The Bromley Pensnett Primary School, when a child has been absent for 7 days or if attendance falls below 95%, at any point during the school year due to illness/other absence, any further absences will not be authorised without medical evidence. It is the parent/carers responsibility to provide evidence that their child is unfit to attend school. A letter will be sent to the parent/carer confirming this.

Education Investigation Service (EIS)

School Based	Step 1	When a child has been absent for 5 days or 10 sessions (over a 6 week period) you will receive a warning letter from the school
	Step 2	When a child has a further 5 days absence throughout any period in the school year, you will receive a second warning letter from the school
Externally Based	Step 3	If attendance does not improve, you will be referred to the Education Investigation Service

Monitoring and Evaluating

Together with the weekly print out of attendance data, the attendance officer also analyses data for each half term to identify any class or year group which is falling below the norm for the school as a whole. This analysis is shared with SLT and then staff. This is in addition to any monitoring and action regarding individual pupils.

The Governors receive a termly report on attendance in the Headteacher's report to Full Governors.

Authorised Absence

The Headteacher may decide to remove the right to the authorised absence due to illness and record any absence as 'unauthorised'. The Headteacher will notify the parent of this decision in writing, In order to avoid this, it is essential that parents inform the school of any health concerns that may be affecting their child's ability to attend the school regularly.

There are a number of categories of authorised absence:

1. The school may give approval, in advance, for the pupil to be out of school:
 - For Example-
 - Religious observance (R),
 - Medical/dental appointment (M). Parents should be encouraged to make appointments out of school hours.
 - Family holiday (H),
 - Agreed extended family holiday (F)
2. The school may accept the explanation offered afterwards as a justification for the absence:
 - Acceptable circumstance, not covered by any other codes (C) e.g. young carers, birth of a child
 - Illness (not medical or dental appointments) (I)
3. The pupil is excluded from school (E)
4. When a traveller child is absent due to travelling (T)

Term Time Holidays

From the 1st of September 2013 and following guidelines from the Dfe (Department for Education), the Headteacher at The Bromley Pensnett Primary School may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**. (This should be coded H). Each request must meet specific 'exceptional circumstances' which would not be expected to be requested within an academic year, or to occur regularly throughout a child's school life.

Any unauthorised leave of absence could result in a referral being made to the Education Investigation Service, where they would then advise you of the possible legal consequences of the unauthorised absence.

A Leave of Absence form should be completed and is available on request from our Attendance Officer or from the School Office. An appointment with the Headteacher may be required. Leave taken without a formal request being made to the Headteacher will remain unauthorised even if the parent enters a request on returning from the leave.

Deleting Pupils from the Roll

Schools should always consider the exceptional circumstances of the case

With LA agreement, schools may delete from the roll a pupil who fails to return within 10 school days of the agreed return date will be referred to the Education Investigation Services (EIS) they will then forward this to the Children Missing in Education (CME team) school will only delete pupils from role when authorised to do so by the EIS or the CME team.

Unauthorised Absence (U)

By law only the school can authorise absence. Schools must judge whether the explanation given is satisfactory justification for the absence. Parentally condoned absence can be a serious problem in some schools. Where this is the case the EIS service should be involved at an early stage.

Family holiday – NOT AGREED, or in excess of agreement (G)

If the school does **not authorise** the absence and the child still goes on holiday, the absence should be recorded G = unauthorised absence.

Unauthorised absence (O)

E.g. family birthdays, shopping, haircut, market day, no contact made by parent/carer, school unable to make contact with parent/carer etc.

Penalty Notices

From 1st September 2017 there are new rules for unauthorised absence in term time. In Dudley, the Education Investigation Service will instigate statutory intervention on behalf of the Local Authority, when notified that a pupil has a relevant level of unauthorised absence. This can result in a Penalty Notice being issued to a child's parents or carers. A Penalty Notice will be issued to each parent. Section 576 of the Education Act 1996 defines a parent as:

- All natural parents, whether married or not
- Any person, who, although they are not a natural parent, has parental responsibility (as defined in the Children Act 1989) for a child or young person
- Any person, who, although not a natural parent, has care of a child or young person- having care of a child or young person means a person with whom the child lives and who looks after the child

A Penalty Notice might be issued when unauthorised absence results in a child having less than 90% attendance or when a child has 10 sessions or more of unauthorised absence. A session in a morning or afternoon, so 10 sessions is the equivalent of a week off school. A Penalty Notice is £60, if paid within 21 days of receipt, rising to £120, if paid after 21 days but within 28 days of receipt.

Parents and carers can be issued with Penalty Notices if a pupil, who has been excluded, contravenes the details set out in the Exclusion Letter as to their whereabouts during the first 6 days of exclusion.

Education Investigation Services (EIS)

The Education Investigation Service (EIS) is responsible for ensuring that parents meet their legal obligations in respect of their child's education and in doing so they may issue penalty fines or take legal proceedings to ensure that parents do so.

The Headteacher and Governing Body of each school have the responsibility to inform the EIS when a child's attendance becomes a matter of concern and to support the EIS in the actions they may take.

The Headteacher and Governing Body of each school have a responsibility to inform the EIS if parents choose to home-school their children or if there is a concern that a child is missing in education.