BROADWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL
Attendance Policy

MRS C JOHNSON - **SEPTEMBER 2021**

REVIEW DATE - **SEPTEMBER 2024**

Contents

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1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

> Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence

> Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled

> Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the school attendance guidance from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on school attendance parental responsibility measures. These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

> Part 6 of The Education Act 1996

> Part 3 of The Education Act 2002

> Part 7 of The Education and Inspections Act 2006

> The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)

> The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Link Governor for Attendance is Mrs Rhian May.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

> Implementation of this policy at the school

> Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

> Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

> Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

3.3 School administrators

The school administrators:

> Take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system

> Follow up absences with first day texts and calls

> Monitor attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level using the A Star Attendance Solutions online system

> Report concerns about attendance to the headteacher

> Work with LA attendance officers and school's Early Help worker to tackle persistent absence

> Arrange calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

> Advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

3.4 Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office.

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present
- Attending an approved off-site educational activity
- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8:30am (Year 3 & Year 5) 8:40am (Year 4 & Year 6) on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:40/8:50am and will be kept open until 9:05am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:05pm and will be kept open until 1:15pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school by telephone on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9:00am or as soon as practically possible (see also section 7).

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

The school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment, however, this authorised absence will still affect a pupil's attendance percentage.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

> Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code

> After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

If the school identifies ongoing punctuality issues, we will contact parents/carers to find out the reason for this and offer support where necessary. This can include support from an Early Help worker for the family at home and wellbeing support for the pupil in school.

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

> Follow up on the child's absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by sending an initial text, followed by a telephone call or home visit if no contact with school is made

> Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary

> Identify whether the absence is approved or not

> Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to parents

The school reports to parents/carers on their child's attendance record in writing once a term, as well as annually in their annual end-of-year report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

We define 'exceptional circumstances' as a solitary event where the date is fixed, such as a funeral or wedding of an immediate family member. Additional information about the event may be requested from parents/carers.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Family holidays of one day or longer, will not be authorised.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

> Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

> Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

5.2 Reducing persistent absence

The school closely monitors attendance using an online system: A Star Attendance Solutions. This involves a four-stage process and aims to reduce persistent absence and increase overall attendance. Further information of the stages can be found in section 7.

Additional support is always available to children and parents/carers at Broadway. This can include a pupil receiving wellbeing/nurturing sessions with a member of staff in school, as well as a family receiving support at home through our Pastoral Support worker. Support from other external professionals can be requested if necessary. Parents/carers are encouraged to contact school if they, or their child, require any support in relation to attending school punctually.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

> The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

> One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

> Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

Excellent attendance is consistently promoted by all staff within class and through the 'Shine Bright' element of our school motto.

The school celebrates and rewards attendance on a weekly basis. Every Friday, the three top-attending classes (must be at least 97%) are promoted on the school's Twitter page and a text is sent to all parents to share the results. Pupils with 100% attendance for the week will be awarded an Attendance Pebble Point.

Any class achieving 100% attendance in a week receives a reward. Rewards have been suggested by the children and include extra break time or being first in the lunch hall.

All children who achieve 100% attendance in one term receive a dip in the Attendance Prize Box and children who received 100% attendance for the full academic year will receive a special reward in July.

7. Attendance monitoring

The school closely monitors attendance on a weekly basis using A Star Attendance Solutions online system. This involves a four-stage process and aims to reduce persistent absence and increase overall attendance. The stages are as follows:

> Stage 1 – Pupils who have an attendance of 93% or below. A letter will be sent out reminding parents/carers of the importance of good attendance.

> Stage 2 – Pupils continue to have attendance of 93% or below and have made no improvement. A letter will be sent home requesting parents to attend a telephone meeting with our Pastoral Support Worker. It is also possible at this stage for parents to arrange to speak to school about any concerns they may have of their child's school attendance and ask for additional support.

> Stage 3 – Pupils continue to show little, or no improvement and attendance has not reached 93% or above. A letter will be sent home advising that the pupil is now on a 4-week monitoring period. Parents at this stage are invited to attend a face to face meeting with the Head teacher and Pastoral Support Worker. During this period, 100% attendance is required unless medical evidence can be provided.

> Stage 4 – Pupils who have not passed the 4-week monitoring period will now be considered for referral to the Local Authority.

A pupil's parent/carer is expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4.2).

If a pupil's absence goes above an excessive number of days in relation to the illness they are absent with, the school will contact the parent/carer of the pupil to discuss the reasons for this and offer any support to re-integrate the pupil back in to school.

The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a pupil's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the pupil will be classified as a persistent absentee. Persistent absentees are closely monitored weekly and may automatically receive a home attendance visit during their next period of absence.

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

School collects and stores attendance data in SIMS and A Star Attendance Solutions. The Headteacher, School Administrators and Early Help worker may use this data for internal purposes, such as:

> Tracking the attendance of individual pupils

> Identifying whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

> Monitoring and evaluate those children identified as being in need of intervention and support.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every three years by the Headteacher. At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

> Child protection and safeguarding policy

> Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence	Pupil from a Traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day