

Brampton Primary School

Attendance Policy

Date	Review Date	Written by	Endorsed by	Link Governor
September 2021	July 2023	Mark Woodhouse	Curriculum and Achievement Committee	



Building Personal Success

Article 3 The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 13 Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

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Introduction:

This policy has been agreed by the governors, staff and pupils of Brampton Primary School. It represents our commitment to strive for 100% attendance, which is achievable, and achieved by many of our children. It sets out the principles, procedures and practice the school will undertake. Strategies, sanctions and possible legal consequences of poor attendance and punctuality are also detailed, as well as rewards for, and benefits of good attendance. This policy will be reviewed, amended as necessary and published annually (In June) in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

Aims:

- Explain why good attendance is important
- Set out strategies to promote attendance and punctuality
- Explain roles and responsibilities in relation to attendance
- Establish a set of procedures to be followed when managing issues of attendance so ensuring consistency of practice
- Enable the school to effectively monitor, evaluate and review its practice to ensure it is striving to improve attendance
- Meet the education laws and guidance produced by the DfE for school attendance

Good attendance is important because:

- Statistics show that pupils with good attendance have better achievement in school
- Children with attendance above 96% make better progress socially and academically
- Children who attend regularly find their learning more satisfying and have fewer gaps in their knowledge

At Brampton Primary School the following attendance benchmarks are used:

- 98%+ - outstanding attendance
- 96%+ - good attendance
- 95% - satisfactory attendance
- Below 95%– unsatisfactory attendance

Roles and responsibilities:

Governors:

- Monitor attendance usually through regular reports at Governors meetings
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the attendance policy
- Agree annual targets to ensure the school is in line with National measures for overall attendance and persistent absence levels

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Deputy Head teacher (Attendance lead):

- Ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately monitor and reflect individual, group and whole school attendance patterns.
- Provide governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of the policy and practice
- Meet with parents/carers to discuss applications for leave or attendance concerns
- Write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance
- Work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and punctuality is an issue
- Ensure a summary of each child's attendance records is reported to parents in the child's summer report

Teaching Staff and Support Staff:

- Acknowledge good attendance and explain to children the benefits of good attendance
- Provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session
- Where irregular attendance and/or punctuality is a concern refer the matter to the attendance officer and attendance lead, who will then pass the concern on to the Local Authority Attendance Management Officer (AMO)

Attendance Officer and Office staff:

- Attendance registers must show whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised
- Morning registration starts at 8:55am and registers remain open for 30 minutes
- Any child arriving late after 9:30am will be marked as an unauthorised absence for the morning
- Record the reasons for absence using the correct code
- Contact parents/carers on the first day of a child's unexplained absence to establish the reason and record in registers
- Ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child at the end of each week
- Unauthorised absences should be calculated for each week. The number of sessions should be counted and the total recorded. A session is a morning or an afternoon and therefore, the day comprises of two sessions
- Make a judgement in conjunction with the attendance lead whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised
- A late register is kept in the office providing information about the time of arrival and reasons for lateness

Local Authority Attendance Management Officer (AMO):

- Enforces the law regarding school attendance
- Support the school through meetings and by monitoring children's attendance
- Go on home visits to engage hard to reach families
- Where irregular attendance and/or punctuality causes concerns, SLT will refer the matter to the AMO
- Providing direct information with pupils who fall below target levels of attendance and devising strategies to improve their attendance in partnership with the school
- Ensuring the borough and school policies on attendance are implemented appropriately in each individual case including the use of legal action against parents where they are failing to fulfil their child's regular school attendance

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- Working closely with schools at transition stages to ensure the identified vulnerable children are provided with all possible support to reduce the likelihood of increased non-attendance, where necessary working and liaising with partner agencies

Parents:

- Ensure their child arrives at school on time to be ready for registration
- Contact the school on the first morning of all absences; giving a reason and explaining when the child will return
- Keep the school updated and after 5 days of absence provide medical evidence
- Not to book routine medical or dental appointments during school time. Medical appointments are counted as an absence on a child's record
- Fulfil their legal duty to ensure their child attends school everyday

Lateness Procedures:

- Children who arrive after 9:00am or 12:30 pm (KS1 and Reception) and after 9:00am or 1:15pm (KS2) should report to the office so that their lateness can be recorded in the late book by the member of office staff on duty that day. The parents of any child who is recorded in the late book three times in a half-term will be contacted and have the importance of punctuality explained to them. Continued lateness will result in a letter of warning being issued by the attendance officer.
If lateness continues to be a concern, the parents may be referred to the Local Authority to advise whether to issue a fixed penalty notice.
- Children who arrive after 9:30am or 12:30pm (KS1 and Reception) and after 9:30am and 1:15pm (KS2) will be marked as an unauthorised absence on the register.
- In the event of an emergency evacuation of the school the late book must be brought out of the building along with the registers so that the presence of such pupils can be checked

Absence procedures:

- Registers should be marked as soon as a child has arrived in the classroom. Mark / for each child present and N for each child absent. Once the attendance officer has ascertained the reason for a child's absence the coding will be changed as appropriate.
- Parents/carers must provide a reason for a child's absence. This may be in the form of a letter, a phone call or an oral explanation to the school office. Phone or oral explanations should be recorded on an absence list. Explanations by the child are not acceptable. Parents are asked to inform the school office on the first day of the child's absence.
- The only acceptable reasons for absence are illness, attendance at a medical appointment, exclusion, religious holiday or family bereavement for which the HT has given permission. Absence to go shopping, to visit relatives, to go on holiday or because a parent is unwell is not acceptable. Any staff who are unsure about how to mark an absence should seek the advice of the attendance officer or write the reason as given by the parent and pass it onto the attendance officer.
- Any absence relating to illness of 5 days or more should be supported by medical evidence. Medication through the use of paracetamol, Calpol or other 'over the counter medicines' is not an acceptable medical reason for absence.
- Once the school office receives an acceptable reason for absence, the absence should be marked as authorised. If after a period of time of 5 days, no explanation has been received, or if the explanation received is judged to be unacceptable, the absence will be marked as unauthorised

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- If no explanation is received for a child's absence the school attendance officer will send a letter asking why the child is absent (if the child is sick a letter is sent asking for medical evidence).
- Class teachers, pastoral workers and admin staff should be alert for patterns of absence, e.g. mostly Mondays or Fridays. If such a pattern is spotted, it should be brought to the attention of the attendance lead immediately
- Taking into account the age of our pupils, in most cases poor patterns of attendance or persistent lateness it is generally the fault of the parent/carer and not the child. All staff should be aware of this fact when dealing with the child.

Leave of absence during term time:

The school **will not** grant any leave of absence during school times unless there are exceptional circumstances. Holidays are not regarded as exceptional circumstances. All requests for leave must be made in writing in advance by the parent to the HT. If this involves a trip abroad, both departure and return dates must be clearly stated. **See appendix 1 – Request for leave form.** The parent needs to be aware that absence beyond the agreed dates will be marked as unauthorised and will result in a fixed penalty notice being issued. Leave will only be considered if the child's attendance is above 97%. Absence during Year 2 and Year 6 is not normally authorised between 1st September and 31st May because of the children's SATs end of year tests. For leave to be authorised there must be exceptional circumstances.

Exceptional Circumstances and Special considerations:

- It is up to the HT to decide whether a request for leave of absence meets the criteria for exceptional circumstances or special consideration.
- Sudden loss of housing through eviction or domestic violence up to a maximum of 3 days
- Religious observance – HT discretion

Special circumstances not included on the list:

- Serious illness of a close relative. In principle leave should not be granted for the illness of a relative unless the attendance lead is convinced the circumstances are truly exceptional
- Pilgrimages. These are rare but can result in children being away from school for significant periods of time and we would not regard them as unavoidable absences
- Weddings can be arranged at weekends or during holidays and are not included on the list of exceptions. If however the attendance lead is convinced that there is a persuasive reason as to why a wedding cannot be held out of school time it is recommended to allow 1 day's leave

The importance of accurate information:

The AMO works in school half a day each week. She/he will contact the parent/carer of any child about whom there are concerns with regards to attendance or punctuality, so it is of the utmost importance that the information we have available is up to date and accurate. School attendance information can ultimately provide evidence in court proceedings and therefore accuracy is essential. It is also a key element in the school's safeguarding strategy.

It is a legal responsibility to include information regarding attendance in a child's annual report. This information includes the number of authorised and unauthorised absences out of the maximum number of possible attendances, together with the number of lates. It is of vital importance that this information is accurate

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Data:

The attendance lead will monitor trends and patterns of attendance across the school. This will be for individuals, classes, year groups including children with SEND, gender and children eligible for pupil premium funding. Where there is a pattern then action will be taken to address this. Targets are set at the start of the year for attendance and this will be monitored to ensure the school is doing all it can to achieve this target. The attendance lead will make sure that pupils whose names appear on the Persistent Absence list are monitored and action is taken to ensure attendance improves. Governors will be provided with termly reports on attendance and actions being taken to improve attendance across the school.

Information:

Parents are informed of current issues in relation to attendance and reminded of school policy through a number of ways:

1. Termly bulletins show class attendance percentages
2. Termly newsletters clearly set out the school's expectations for attendance and punctuality
3. End of the term 100% attendance certificates celebrate good attendance
4. Termly newsletters – including a summary of the schools attendance policy

Strategies to improve attendance:

At Brampton Primary School we work with parents to ensure we improve their child's attendance.

These are some of the strategies we use:

- Reward good attendance with 100% certificates, prizes, special reward assemblies and extra playtime
- We give a weekly attendance trophy to the best class in each phase in our school – Early Years, KS1, Lower KS2 and Upper KS2.
- Each half term children with 100% attendance receive special certificates.
- SAM (School Attendance Mascot) visits school every term to give out 100% certificates
- All children with 100% attendance for the whole year are entered into a special prize draw.
The winning prize is an iPad

The importance of parental engagement:

Parental engagement is key to successfully improving attendance. Class teachers and pastoral workers have daily contact with parents and are key to having early conversations with parents to ensure their children attend school on time each day. We would much rather work to improve attendance at this early stage, however there may be times when the process needs to be formalised to ensure advice is acted upon and attendance improves. We invite parents in for Attendance Surgery meetings to look at how attendance can be improved. This is with the Attendance Officer or the Attendance Leader. If necessary, an Attendance Agreement may be suggested – this is a voluntary offer for parents to work together with the school to improve attendance. **(See appendix 2)**. At times Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) may be requested from the Attendance Management Service in cases that are appropriate such as unauthorised holidays, persistent absences or persistent lateness. If these fail to have an impact, then the school will refer to the Attendance Management Service for an Attendance Panel Hearing (APH) which could lead to a referral to the Magistrates Court and possible prosecution.

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Children Missing in Education (CME):

If families move away from the area, or wish to transfer to another school, the school must be informed in writing. Children cannot be taken off roll until the school has received notification from another school that a place has been offered and accepted. Children who stop attending school and who cannot be traced must not be removed from the school roll. These children are reported to Newham's Schools Attendance Management Service using the CME form. Where a child is missing from education the LA (Local Authority) guidance will be followed

Children on the schools at risk register may not be taken off roll without permission from Social Services.

Safeguarding:

There may be times that due to family issues e.g. domestic violence that children are not able to attend school for safety reasons. This will be marked with a C code. Children who are unable to attend due to the safety of the family e.g. police protection will be marked as a C code. Children will not be removed from the register without the agreement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and only if the child has a place at another school.

Where there is suspicion of a family going missing because of leaving to go to another country linked to terrorism then it must be reported in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and reported under the Prevent Agenda in consultation with the DSL.

Where there is suspicion that a child (girl) is being taken away to a country linked to FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) then it must be investigated sensitively. If there is a suspicion that a child is at risk of FGM then it must be immediately reported in line with the school's safeguarding procedures. Countries that pose a high risk of exposure to FGM are Burkino Faso, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan. If a child returns from these countries and there is confirmation that FGM has taken place, then it must be reported to the police.

Sanctions:

A fixed term penalty notice will be issued for unauthorised leave of absence (holiday) taken without permission after the third day of absence. It will be issued by the Attendance Management Service following discussions with the school's attendance lead. The fine is £60 per child, per parent if paid within 21 days. Arrangements for payment will be detailed on the penalty notice. This rises to £120.00 per child, per parent if paid within 28 days. If the fine is not paid in full by the end of the 28 days, the Local Authority must either prosecute for the offence or withdraw the notice. This prosecution is for the offence of failing to secure attendance at school **not** for non-payment of the fine. Prosecutions are brought under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996.

Where unauthorised leave of absence has been taken without permission which exceeds 20 days or more, the school should advise the LBN pupil services in order that steps can be implemented with a view to removing the child from roll.

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Recognition of Achievement:

Our Behaviour Policy describes a comprehensive system for the recognition and reward of children's achievement. Attendance and punctuality are included in the system as follows:

- At the end of each week the attendance for each class is worked out. These are displayed on the parent's notice board for everyone to see.
- We give a weekly attendance trophy to the best class in each phase in our school – Early Years, KS1, Lower KS2 and Upper KS2.
- The class with the best attendance each week receives extra playtime
- Class attendance is also recorded on a Phase attendance display for everyone to see.
- Individual Attendance is celebrated each term. Each term pupils will receive a certificate if they achieve 100% attendance. These are given out during attendance assemblies each term.
- SAM (School Attendance Mascot) visits school every term to give out 100% certificates
- All children with 100% attendance for the year are entered into a special prize draw. The winning prize is an iPad

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Appendix 1

Application for leave of absence during term-time

Please complete this application form **at least one week before the start of absence** and return to the school office. Once the office receives the form, **please allow 72 hours for the request to be processed.**

This school’s policy is not to authorise leave of absence during term time. Any applications for leave in term time must be made in writing to the Headteacher. Heads may not grant any leave of absence during term-time unless there are exceptional circumstances and evidence is provided. Please note that evidence from abroad is not accepted. If the leave is granted Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school. However in this school that discretion will only be exercised in the most exceptional circumstances.

Date of application: _____

Childs name: _____ Year: _____ Class: _____ Attendance: _____

Childs name: _____ Year: _____ Class: _____ Attendance: _____

Childs name: _____ Year: _____ Class: _____ Attendance: _____

Start date of absence: _____

Date of return to school: _____

Number of days requested: _____

Reason for absence: _____

I agree to complete a holiday diary if requested by the Headteacher: **Yes** **No**

If a child is taken on holiday during term-time without obtaining the school’s agreement a penalty notice will be issued if the absence is more than three consecutive days. You may also receive a fine if you delay your return from an extended term-time holiday without school agreement.

Parent/Carer Signature: _____

Headteacher to complete within 72 hours

Absence authorised

Absence unauthorised
(Year 2/6 or over 10 days)

Headteacher remarks:

Holiday diary to be given: **YES** **NO**

Headteacher signature: _____

Time Received: _____

School Received Date Stamp:

Office Staff Signature:

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Appendix 2



Attendance and Punctuality Agreement

Pupils name	
DOB	
Address	
Date and time of meeting	
Venue	
Present at meeting	
Reason for meeting	
Action points resulting	

Aims

- To improve attendance and/or punctuality for the child named above.
- To ensure information is shared to improve attendance and punctuality.
- To avoid referrals to the attendance management service.

Parents: I/we agree to

- Ensure that my child always arrives on time (before 8.50)
- Ensure my child attends school every day.
- Ensure my child has no unauthorised absence.
- Provide medical evidence for any absences.
- Inform the school on the first day of any absence.
- Not make any request for leave for any reason.
- Attend any further meetings

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