



Attendance Policy

BRAYS SCHOOL

Forward Education Trust	January 2018
Date of Adoption:	
Reviewed date:	January 2019
Review date:	February 2020

Signed: (Chair of Local Academy Council) Date:.....

Rationale

Brays School places a high priority on achieving standards and feel that excellent pupil attendance and punctuality are essential. 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. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Children with poor attendance tend to achieve less in both primary and secondary school.

In order for children to achieve their potential, pupils must be highly motivated to learn as well as keen and eager to attend school. Regular, punctual attendance will establish good habits that will support them throughout their lives.

To achieve this, Brays School is committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that maximum attendance is achieved, whilst discouraging any form of unauthorised absence. Parents/carers will be informed regularly of the requirements on attendance.

Statistics show that, in general, the higher the percentage of sessions missed, the greater the impact on learning;

Attendance during one school year	equals this number of days absent	which is approximately this many weeks absent	which means this number of lessons missed
95%	9 days	2 weeks	50 lessons
90%	19 days	4 weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 days	6 weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 days	8 weeks	200 lessons

Pupils are admitted to the school only after request for a placement from the Local Authority (SENAR). Pupils have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).

A small minority of pupils may contract severe illness or, because of the nature of their disability, be susceptible to longer or more regular periods of illness. Where this is a known factor, school and the health team have proactive plans in place to ensure the continued education, which are implemented each time a period of illness occurs. When children are ill for extended periods of time regular contact will be made with the parent/carer. This ensures support and guidance is offered by the school in consultation with the medical professionals.

Aims

1. To improve the overall attendance of pupils at the school.
2. To make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents/carers, all staff and governors.
3. To provide support and advice (including medical advice and guidance to parents/carers and pupils).

4. To develop a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.
5. To further develop positive and consistent communication between home and school.
6. To implement an effective monitoring and intervention strategy.
7. To promote the City's Fast Track system of highlighting poor attendance.
8. To recognise the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence through illness.

Registration

A register of attendance for all pupils on the school roll is taken twice a day: once at the start of the morning session and once during the afternoon session. For each pupil, the register will be marked either as present, engaged in an approved educational activity away from the school site or absent. If the pupil is absent, the register will say whether or not the absence has been authorised by the school.

Register Times and Coding:

Registrations begins at 8.50 a.m. (for all pupils) and at 1.15pm (EYFS and KS1) and 1.30pm (KS2).

Registers close at 9.20am and 1.45pm.

A mark will be made in respect of each pupil during registration. Any pupil who is not present at this time will be marked unauthorised absent, unless leave has been granted by the school in advance or the reason for absence is already known and accepted by the school as legitimate. School staff will amend the registers to indicate lateness if a pupil arrives after the register closes. (See Appendix A)

In the case of unavoidable delay for pupils using school transport, arrival after 9.30a.m. will not incur a late mark.

Authorised & Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is where the school has either given approval in advance for a pupil to be absent, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as a satisfactory justification for absence e.g. illness. Only the school may authorise the absence. Unauthorised absence is absence without permission from an authorised representative of the school. This includes all unexplained or unjustified absences.

Authorised absences may include the following:

- Illness, medical and dental appointments
- Religious day observance (parents/carers are requested to notify the school well in advance)
- Dual registration
- Exceptional compassionate circumstances

Holiday in Term Time

Brays School follows Birmingham Local Authority Guidance and this does not allow absence for holidays. Any absence, other than for illness or emergency medical attention, will be coded as unauthorised: (G) – Family holiday not agreed or (O) Unauthorised. Parents/carers may choose to complete an ‘Exceptional Circumstances Pupil Term Time Leave Request Form’ stating why they are removing their child during term time. This is given to the Head teacher. Only exceptional circumstances will be authorised on a case by case basis. (For a list of examples of exceptional circumstances – See Appendix B).

If an “Exceptional Circumstances Pupil Term Time Leave Request Form’ is rejected the absence, should the parent still proceed with the removal of their child during term time, maybe dealt with under the Fast Track and Leave in Term Time Penalty processes.

First Day Contact and Persistent Absence

Parents/carers will be contacted by telephone on the first day of absence if no message has been sent into school giving reasons for the absence. Attendance which falls below 90% during a term, will trigger investigative action by the school. If further action is required, a model of escalation will be followed, beginning with a supportive phone call, a possible meeting with the strategic lead for attendance and the school nurse. During this process, agreed strategies will form an action plan for improving attendance where appropriate. Where structured intervention fails to bring about an improvement in attendance, the school may consider taking legal action where this is deemed necessary.

Attendance is monitored regularly through individual summary sheets and analysis of data trends. Parents/carers are encouraged to communicate with the school via telephone or the home school book. Transport escorts may provide the first point of contact between parents/carers and the school.

School attendance, Safeguarding and Children Missing Education

If a child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. School staff will follow the Local Authority procedures for dealing with children that go missing from education (see appendix C). All Schools are required to make the local authority aware of every registered pupil who fails to attend school regularly and any children who have been absent from school, where the absence has been treated as unauthorised for a continuous period of not less than 5 school days. This attendance policy is part of broader suite of Safeguarding policies including the schools Safeguarding Policy and the Behaviour and Welfare Policy which support the wellbeing of our children.

Regulations 8(f) and 8(h) of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, place a duty on schools and local authorities to jointly carry out reasonable enquiries to try and locate pupils absent from school whose whereabouts are unknown.

The Birmingham City Council Children Missing *from* Education (CME) team works jointly with schools in respect of pupils on roll at school, who are absent from school and their whereabouts is unknown’.

This might be:

- A child who is not at their last known address and:
 - has 5 or more days of continuous absence from school without explanation, or:
 - has left school suddenly and their destination is unknown.
- The family moving within the city but the parents fail to inform the school of the house move or transfer to a new school.
- The family move out of the city and relocate to a new area within the UK but parents fail to inform the school.
- The family relocate abroad and fail to inform the school of their destination.
- The family is displaced as a result of 'crisis' e.g. domestic violence, homelessness.
- Parent/school disagreement and parents withdraw the child from school.
- Family separation.

Where a child cannot be accounted for the school may carry out a home visit or a health and well-being concern may be raised.

Any child whose whereabouts are known but continues to have unauthorised absences, should be assessed to determine if they have additional needs and require support such as a referral to Early Help, or to the school nurse or the Local Authority's Safeguarding Team.

If there are no additional needs and the parent does not consent to additional support, or support has been put in place and it has not impacted on attendance, the school should place the child on the 'Spotlight on Attendance' program.

Parents who wish to educate their child at home

Where a parent notifies the school in writing of their intention to home educate, the school must inform the local authority using the Birmingham City Council EHE referral form, before deleting the child from its admission register. (See the Birmingham School Noticeboard, and search for 'Elective Home Education' for the corresponding Service Policy dated April 2016 for further guidance).

Telephone: 0121 464 7215

Email: home.education@birmingham.gov.uk

Procedures for reporting Children Missing from Education (CME) – (Appendix C)

Roles and Responsibilities

Parents have a legal responsibility to send their child to school and to inform school of a child's absence. It is a parent/carers responsibility to contact school directly when their child is absent.

Teachers:

- To keep an accurate attendance register
- To inform administration staff if no message has been received regarding a pupil absence
- To highlight concerns regarding attendance to the Leadership team.

Administration Staff:

- Input attendance data SIMS and CPOMs
- Print off reports weekly for monitoring purposes
- Managing the Pupil Signing in/out book.
- Make the first day absence calls and record reasons for absence

Strategic Lead for Attendance:

- To act as 'attendance leader' with responsibility for the strategic management of the attendance agenda
- To set clear, challenging and realistic targets as part of the school self-review
- Intervene early when individual pupil absence gives cause for concern
- Monitor patterns of attendance and lateness
- Inform/meet with parents/carers where there are attendance concerns
- Liaise with the Special School Nursing Team
- Monitor attendance and any child with below 90% attendance will trigger concern and an action plan put in place where appropriate
- Take legal action following 'Fast Track' if and when necessary

Head Teacher

- Inform the Local Academy Council of attendance issues and records.

Local Academy Council:

- Monitor whole school attendance half-termly and take appropriate action should it affect standards.

Promoting Good Attendance

At Brays School we believe in celebrating fantastic attendance and appreciate the support we receive from families in this aim through the following methods:

- Home/School Agreement
- School Newsletters
- Attendance Newsletters
- Class Attendance Displays
- Gold Certificate and reward (98% or more attendance during the term)
- Improved Attendance Certificate and reward (Improved attendance compared to the previous half term)
- Letters/texts are sent to parents/carers congratulating them on their child's improved or outstanding attendance

Appendix A

ATTENDANCE CODES, DESCRIPTIONS AND MEANINGS

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorised Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorised absence
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorised absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed <u>or</u> days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorised absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorised absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorised absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorised absence
O	Unauthorised absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
T	Traveller absence	Authorised absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Not counted in possible attendances
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Enforced and partial enforced closure	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not yet on roll	Not counted in possible attendances
#	School closed to pupils	Not counted in possible attendances

KEY

Present
Authorised absence
Unauthorised absence
Approved Education Activity (Present)
Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix B

Examples of exceptional circumstances

Head Teachers may, on rare occasions, make a judgement that there are genuine and exceptional circumstances pertaining to an application to take a pupil out of school during term. Head Teachers should not operate a blanket ban on all term time leave and should consider each application on its merits.

Examples of exceptional circumstances could include:

- death of parent/carer or sibling of the pupil
- life threatening or critical illness of parent or sibling of the pupil • parent/carer recuperation and convalescence from critical illness or surgery (leave request to be made within 6 months of recovery and medical evidence required)
- leave for armed forces personnel who are prevented by operational duties to take their leave at any other time

It is not always in the best interests of the pupil nor appropriate for them to miss school for family emergencies that are being dealt with by adult family members. School and school relationships can provide pupils with stability and care during difficult times. If leave is granted, the Head Teacher is the person who determines the number of school days a child can be away from school.