



Brentfield Primary School

Children of Today, Champions for Tomorrow

Attendance Policy

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1. Aims

Good attendance at school is not just beneficial but essential in enabling pupils to reach their full educational achievement. Statistics show a direct link between under-achievement and absence below 95%. Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically and as well as this, coming to school helps to cultivate our BRAVE school values:

- Belong
- Responsible
- Aspirational
- Value diversity
- Empowered

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

- Setting high expectations for the attendance and punctuality of all pupils
- Promoting good attendance and the benefits of good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families
- Working in partnership with parents, the local authority and other relevant services to remove barriers to attendance before enforcement action is considered

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy is based on the Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory guidance on working together to improve school attendance and school attendance parental responsibility measures. The guidance is based on the following pieces of legislation, which set 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, and 2016 amendments)
- The School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 and the 2024 amendment

It also refers to:

- School census guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance: guidance for schools
- Ofsted's 2025 framework toolkit

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Staff responsible for monitoring attendance are:

- Nicola Harmer (Head Teacher)
- Sunita Rawat (Assistant Head & Senior Attendance Champion)
- Sam Matthews (Family Support Manager)
- Bushra Ageli (Welfare Officer)
- Katrina Lovett (Local Authority Education Welfare Officer)

Responsibilities of the governing board

- Promote the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Ensure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly review and challenge attendance data and help school leaders focus improvement efforts on those who need it most
- Monitor attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils needs

Responsibility of the Headteacher

- Implement this policy
- Monitor school-level absence data and reporting it to governors termly
- Support staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
- Monitor the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Communicate the school's high expectations to the school community
- Authorise the issuing of fixed penalty notices

Responsibilities of the designated senior attendance champion

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluate and monitor expectations and processes
- Have an oversight of data analysis including data that is broken down by vulnerable groups
- Devise specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data
- Establish and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaise with pupils, parent/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Monitor the attendance of pupils accessing alternative provision or off-site education in line with statutory requirements

Responsibilities of the welfare officer and Family Support Officer

- Monitor and analyse attendance data
- Provide regular attendance reports to school staff and report concerns about attendance at weekly Inclusion meetings.
- Alongside the senior attendance champion, build relationships with parent/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Meet with the families of those pupils at risk of persistent or severe absence, and agreeing actions or interventions to improve the situation
- Make referrals to services and organisations that can provide support including working with education welfare officer to tackle persistent and severe absence
- Advise the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Responsibilities of classroom staff

- Ensure that all pupils are registered accurately and on time both in the morning and afternoon.
- Promote and reward good attendance with pupils.
- Liaise with appropriate colleagues on matters of attendance and punctuality.
- Communicate any concerns or underlying issues that may account for a child's absence.
- Support pupils with absence to engage with their learning once they are back in school.

Responsibilities of parents/carers

- Support the school in aiming for 100% attendance each year
- Inform the school on the first day of absence (by 8.30) and subsequent days of absence
- Discuss in advance any planned absences and not take term time holidays
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- Not let children take time off for minor ailments

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact
- Build a routine that promotes good punctuality and attendance
- Seek support from the school, where necessary, for maintaining good attendance

Responsibilities of pupils

- Attend every day unless they are ill or have an authorised absence.
- Arrive in school on time and go straight to class
- Take responsibility for registering at the reception desk or welfare officer if they are late

Ensuring regular attendance at school is a parent/carer's legal responsibility and permitting absence from school that is not authorised by the school creates an offence in law.

4. Role of local authority attendance officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work together in resolving any issues. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to Brent Council's Education Welfare Service. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, the Brent School Attendance Officer can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court. Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available on Brent Council's website on www.brent.gov.uk.

5. Recording and Monitoring Attendance and Punctuality

Recording attendance

Legally the register must be taken twice a day. We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session in the afternoon. Morning registers will be taken by 8.50am and afternoon registers will be taken by 12.45pm for Early Years, 12.55pm for Y1 & Y2 and 1.10pm for Years 3-6.

Children arriving late (after 8.45am) must wait at the main gate with their parent/carer to be escorted into the school. In accordance with the DfE's regulations and guidance, if a child arrives late, they will receive an 'L' mark that shows them to be late. Registers are closed at 9.15am. Any pupil arriving after this time is marked with a U code, which constitutes an unauthorised absence.

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 6 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Monitoring attendance and punctuality

The school will analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils, groups or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance and identify pupils whose absences may be a cause for concern, especially those who demonstrate patterns of persistent or severe absence. In addition, class attendance will be monitored weekly and shared with pupils.

Pupil attendance data will also be collected and published at both local authority and national levels. The school will compare its attendance data to the national average and share the findings with the governing board.

Parents/carers will be contacted by the school if their child is regularly late or absent. If this continues to be a concern, the Welfare Officer or Family Support Manager will meet with parents to discuss the importance of good time keeping and decide on next steps such as putting a plan in place or beginning more formal procedures.

6. Late Collections (After School)

On the rare occasion that parents are running late, parents should call the school office and inform them of the reason why they are unable to collect on time and provide an estimated time of arrival. Fees will apply for late collection.

End of school day:

Early Years and Key stage 1 – 3:10pm

KS2 – 3:15pm

7. Types of Absence

Every half-day absence from school will be classified by the school, as either authorised or unauthorised based on the information about the reason for absence. This information should be provided on the first morning of the pupil being absent. It can be tricky deciding whether or not to keep your child off school but the government has produced some simple guidelines. (Appendix 1)

Authorised Absence

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason like:

- Illness (not minor ailments)
- Medical (hospital appointments which unavoidably fall in school time)
- Emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. The school will request medical evidence such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card/text or other appropriate form of evidence.

Unauthorised Absence

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" will be given. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily (celebrating birthdays etc.)
- Absences which have not been adequately explained
- Day trips and holidays during term time which have not been agreed.

These types of absence can lead to sanctions and/or legal proceedings against parents/carers.

Persistent and Severe Absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school. Reducing persistent and severe absence is central to the school's strategy for improving attendance.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents/carers of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school
- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

8. Penalty Notices

The headteacher and local authority can issue penalty notices to parents for the unauthorised absence of children of compulsory school age.

Before issuing a notice, the school will consider:

- Whether the national threshold is met (10 sessions of unauthorised absence in 10 school weeks)
- If a penalty notice is the most appropriate action
- Whether other support, improvement notices, or legal interventions would be better
- Any Equality Act 2010 obligations that make issuing a notice inappropriate

Each parent can be issued a notice, payable directly to the local authority:

- First notice: £80 within 21 days, £160 within 28 days
- Second notice (same pupil): £160 within 28 days
- Third notice: Cannot be issued for the same pupil within 3 years; alternative action taken if thresholds are met

Penalty notices can also be issued if a child is in a public place without justification during the first 5 days of a suspension/exclusion:

- £60 within 21 days, £120 thereafter

Notices to improve

If the national threshold has been met and support is appropriate, but parents do not engage with offers of support, the school may offer a notice to improve to give parents a final chance to engage with support.

They will include:

- Details of the pupil's attendance record and of the offences
- The benefits of regular attendance and the duty of parents under [section 7 of the Education Act 1996](#)
- Details of the support provided so far
- Opportunities for further support, or to access previously provided support that was not engaged with
- A clear warning that a penalty notice may be issued if attendance does not improve within the improvement period, along with details of what sufficient improvement looks like, which will be decided on a case-by-case basis
- A clear timeframe of between 3 and 6 weeks for the improvement period
- The grounds on which a penalty notice may be issued before the end of the improvement period

9. Children Missing Education (CME)

No child may be removed from the school roll without consultation between the Head Teacher and the Attendance Service.

If no reason has been given for a child's absence after 3 days and the school have not been able to contact parents/carers, a referral will be made to the local authority Education Welfare Service.

The service will also advise on when schools should make referrals to Brent Family Front Door or call the police.

10. Moving School

If a pupil is moving out of the area, to a new school or being home schooled, parents/carers must inform the school in advance and complete a leavers form.

11. Reporting Absence Procedures

If a child is absent, we expect parents to:

- Contact the school before 8.30am on the first day of absence. This is done by calling 020 8965 5326, pressing option 1 and leaving a message or using the Arbor App.
- Call the school each day their child is absent unless it is a known long-term illness/absence.

12. Following up Unexplained Absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may contact Social Care or the Brent School Attendance Officer.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and update this on our system
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving the Brent Education Welfare Service.

As part of our safeguarding procedures, where a child has a social worker, absence information (reported or unexplained) will be shared with the relevant contact. This is usually communicated on the day of absence.

13. Leave of Absence

The Pupil Registration Regulations specify that Head teachers **may not** grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

At Brentfield School, we interpret 'exceptional' in this context as being unique and significant emotional, educational or spiritual value to the child, which outweighs the loss of teaching time. The head teacher will consider each case on an individual basis (looking at past requests, attendance and attainment). Most requests will be refused based on the fact that there are 13 weeks holiday a year.

The school will authorise absence for religious observance in line with statutory regulations. Normally, **one day** per academic year is authorised.

Any period of leave taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and we may refer parent/carers to Brent Council's Education Welfare Service and parent/carers may receive a Formal Warning, Education Penalty Notice or be prosecuted in court.

If requesting term time leave, a form must be completed in advance. Forms are available from the school office or on the school website. It should not be assumed that the request will be granted and flights should not be booked prior to receiving a reply from the head teacher.

14. Inclusion and Diversity

We recognise the importance of good mental health and social development and encourage our school community to feel empowered and safe to raise concerns. We value the diversity within our school community and challenge views which may negatively impact the well-being of others.

We are committed to being an anti-racist and anti-bullying school. Our community should feel confident that if racist or bullying incidents occur, these will be challenged and fully investigated to ensure that this does not hinder good attendance and punctuality.

15. Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility - parents, pupils and all members of school staff.

As a school we will:

- Give parents details on attendance in our newsletters and school website.
- Report to parent/carers regarding their child's attendance via Arbor.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual class achievements and awarding class attendance trophies.
- Incentivise good or improved attendance through rewards and participation in special events.
- Co-ordinate 'Early Bird' weeks with the school allocated Education Welfare Officer.

16. Supporting pupils who are absent or late due to ill health, complex barriers or SEND

In cases where absences/lateness has been the result of more complex issues, the school will, in consultation with the family, devise a plan of support.

17. Links with Other Policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour policy
- Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Policy

18. What your child's attendance percentage means

ATTENDANCE	
100 - 99%	Exceptional Best chances of success in school.
98 - 96%	Good Best chances of success in school.
95% or below	Room for Improvement Children's attendance is below average and they will be missing out on learning. Parents must work with the school to improve attendance. Attendance will be carefully monitored. Contact will be made by the Welfare Officer or Family Support Manager if attendance does not improve.

ATTENDANCE	
90% or below	<p>Cause for concern Any child whose attendance falls below 90% is regarded nationally as a child who has persistent absence. Schools have targets to reduce the levels of persistent absence and the school and local authority work closely with families to support them in getting their child to school each day. However, if a child's attendance does not improve next steps may include a penalty notice and possible legal proceedings.</p> <p>At Brentfield, this is a safeguarding concern.</p>
50% or below	<p>Serious concern Lowest chance of pupil success and possible legal proceedings.</p> <p>At Brentfield, this is a safeguarding concern.</p>

Appendix 1

Is my child too ill for School

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Coughs, Colds and Covid

It's fine to send your child to school with a minor cough or common cold. But if they have a fever, keep them off school until the fever goes.

High temperature

If your child has a high temperature, keep them off school until it goes away.

Chickenpox

If your child has chickenpox, keep them off school until all the spots have crusted over. This is usually about 5 days after the spots first appeared.

Cold sores

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have a cold sore. Encourage them not to touch the blister or kiss anyone while they have the cold sore, or to share things like cups and towels.

Conjunctivitis

You don't need to keep your child away from school if they have conjunctivitis. Do get advice from your pharmacist. Encourage your child not to rub their eyes and to wash their hands regularly.

Ear infection

If your child has an ear infection and a high temperature or severe earache, keep them off school until they're feeling better or their high temperature goes away.

Hand, foot and mouth disease

If your child has hand, foot and mouth disease but seems well enough to go to school, there's no need to keep them off. Encourage your child to throw away any used tissues straight away and to wash their hands regularly.

Head lice and nits

There's no need to keep your child off school if they have head lice. You can treat head lice and nits without seeing a GP.

Ringworm

If your child has ringworm, see your pharmacist unless it's on their scalp, in which case you should see a GP.

It's fine for your child to go to school once they have started treatment.

Scarlet fever

If your child has scarlet fever, they'll need treatment with antibiotics from a GP. Otherwise they'll be infectious for 2 to 3 weeks. Your child can go back to school 24 hours after starting antibiotics.

Slapped cheek syndrome (fifth disease)

You don't need to keep your child off school if they have slapped cheek syndrome, because once the rash appears, they're no longer infectious. If you suspect your child has slapped cheek syndrome, take them to see a GP and let their school know if they're diagnosed with it.

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Children with diarrhoea or vomiting should stay away from school for 2 days after their symptoms have gone.