

# Policy

## Bradfield CE Primary School

### Attendance



<b>Policy Name</b>	Attendance
<b>Brief Description:</b>	This document provides an overview of how pupil's attendance is managed in school
<b>Status: Statutory/non-statutory</b>	Non-Statutory Policy
<b>Other related policies and procedures:</b>	Children with Health Needs who Cannot Attend School
<b>Approval level: HT/Governors/FGB</b>	Headteacher
<b>Approved by the Governing Board on:</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2022
<b>Frequency to be reviewed</b>	Every 3 years
<b>Latest Date for Next Review:</b>	November 2025
<b>Version + Schedule of Amendments:</b>	Originally written March 2015 Updated April 2020 Updated to include DfE guidance Nov 2022 Update April 2024
<b>Signed:</b>	
<b>Position:</b>	
<b>Date of Signature:</b>	

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## Introduction

Bradfield CE Primary School seeks to ensure that all its pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential. The school will strive to provide a welcoming, caring environment, whereby each member of the school community feels wanted and secure.

All school staff will work with pupils and their families to ensure each pupil attends school regularly and punctually.

To meet these objectives Bradfield CE Primary School will establish an effective and efficient system of communication with pupils, parents and appropriate agencies to provide mutual information, advice and support.

## 1. Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligation with regards to school attendance through our whole-school culture and ethos that values good attendance, including:

- Promoting good attendance
- Reducing absence, including persistent and severe absence
- Ensuring every pupil has access to the full-time education to which they are entitled
- Acting early to address patterns of absence
- Building strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the support in place to attend school

We will also promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) 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:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

#### **3.2 The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team**

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
- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies
- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues. Make contact early if issues arise and be quick to respond to parents if they raise issues.
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence (EWO)
- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary
- Take each request for absence on its own merit and communicate the decision as soon as possible

#### **3.3 The Office**

The school office is responsible for:

- Taking calls from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and recording it on the school system
- Check registers daily, correct codes applied and follow up on any absences not advised.
- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the Headteacher
- Discussing with the Headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices and completing this administrative role

#### **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. Teachers are also to meet with parents to discuss attendance, where appropriate.

#### **3.5 Parents/carers**

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Make sure their child attends every day on time
- Call the school to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return
- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child
- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child are made outside of the school day
- Request absences using Appendix A (see section 5). Request a meeting with the headteacher if further explanation or discussion is needed

Pupils are expected to:

- Arrive at school every day between 8:45 and 8:55 a.m.

## 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 school day and at the start of the afternoon session. We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Doors open for Key Stage Two pupils at 8:45am and at 8:50am for Key Stage One and EYFS. Registers close at **9:00am** and anyone arriving after this time will be marked as late (Code: L). Any children arriving **after 9:30am**, will be marked as 'late after the register has closed' (Code: U). The register for the afternoon session will be taken at 1.15pm.

### 4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by calling the school office staff.

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. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

### 4.3 Planned absence

Attending an urgent 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. Non-emergency dentist and medical appointments should be made out of school time. These absences will be counted as an unauthorised absence.

### 4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Between 9:00 and 9:30 will be marked as late, using the appropriate code and minutes late recorded.
- After the register has closed at 9:30 it will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

#### **4.5 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 make a home visit, refer to Contact Advice Assessment Service or contact the police if there are concerns about a pupil's welfare.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- 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 an education welfare officer

#### **4.6 Reporting to parents/carers**

The school will provide an annual attendance report to inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels.

## **5. Authorised and unauthorised absence**

### **5.1 Approval for term-time absence**

The Headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the Headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

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

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 10 days before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, Appendix A The Headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

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 Legal sanctions**

The 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 are issued by the local authority.

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

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

## 6. Attendance monitoring

### 6.1 Monitoring attendance

The Schools will:

- Monitoring attendance and absence data will take place half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level.
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern
- Follow the school's 'attendance flowchart' (Appendix B) which stipulates the thresholds in attendance for different actions to take place. This includes meeting with class teachers, phase leaders or the headteacher as well as the issuing of attendance concern letters (Appendix C) and the involvement of the Education Welfare Officer (EWO).
- Children who are persistently absent will be required to meet with the headteacher to produce an attendance plan.

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.

### 6.2 Reducing 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.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence
- Hold regular meetings with the parents 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

The HT will agree an attendance action plan to support the attendance of pupils for whom there are emerging attendance concerns. Attendance meetings will be held for pupils whose attendance is less than 90% and there are concerns.

## 7. Monitoring arrangements

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

## 8. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Child missing from Education

### Appendix A

#### Request for Leave of Absence Form – parent/carer to complete

##### REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL DURING TERM TIME

*To be completed at least one month before the proposed leave of absence.*

Name of Student:	Class:
Purpose of Absence:	
Reason for absence during term time:	
Proposed start date of absence:	Date of return to School:
Reason why it is not possible to take holiday other than in term time:	
Are there siblings at another West Berkshire School? YES/NO  If so, which school is it?	

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Parent/Guardian)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### School to complete:

Number of days absence requested:	
Percentage attendance:	
Has holiday during term time been requested previously and if so, when and how many days:	

Holiday leave is:	APPROVED/NOT APPROVED
Reason:	
Date Parent/Guardian Informed of decision:	

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)      Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

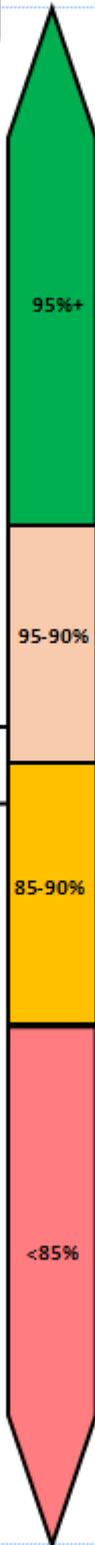
# Attendance Flowchart

- Teachers/Admin Team**
- Daily attendance data provided to admin
  - First day calling to parents/carers to follow-up on absence

- Key Stage Leaders**
- Meet with parents of children who's attendance falls below 90%.

- Admin/Assistant Headteacher**
- Monitor attendance termly and ensure letters are sent out
  - Produce attendance report termly
  - Share concerns with class teachers, Key Stage Leaders and Headteacher where needed so they can make contact
  - Coordinate and monitor attendance of vulnerable groups e.g. PPG, EAL, GRT. Feedback to the Headteacher.

- Headteacher**
- Meet with parents/carers of pupils with attendance below 85%
  - Meet with parents with attendance below 90% (if meeting with key Stage Leader has no impact).
  - Meeting with children with persistent late ness (if meeting with class teacher has no impact)



- Under 95%**
- No requests to be authorized
  - Send 'Absence Request Refusal' Letter

- Under 95%**
- As soon as attendance falls below 90% send letter (L1 Letter)
  - Class teacher to meet with parents/carers to discuss absence.

- 20 Sessions—Illness**
- Consider sending a medical evidence letter (M1 Letter)

- Lateness**
- If persistent late ness (10% or 6 lates) within a term, send Late letter
  - Class Teacher to meet and discuss late ness with parent/carer
  - No improvement, escalate to meeting with the Headteacher and EWO

- Under 90%**
- Send letter (L2 letter)
  - Class teacher and Key Stage Leader to meet with parent/carer to discuss attendance and create an action-plan to make improvements.

- Under 85%**
- Send letter (L3 letter)
  - Headteacher to meet with parent/carer to discuss attendance and to plan for immediate improvement.

- No Improvement**
- School and EWO consider alternative action



## Appendix C

### 95-90%

Re: Attendance Monitoring

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

We would like to make you aware that \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance has fallen to \_\_\_\_\_. This is below Bradfield's threshold for good attendance of 95%.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's overall attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before the register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late will be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day unauthorised absence.

I enclose a copy of \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (Late after the register closed).

We always aim to work closely with our parents and to support them. Therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel that you feel I should be are of, please contact me to discuss it.

With kind regards,

### 85%-90%

Re: Attendance Concern

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to make you aware that \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance has fallen to \_\_\_\_\_. This is significantly below Bradfield's threshold for good attendance of 95%.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's overall attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before the register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late will be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day unauthorised absence.

I enclose a copy of \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (Late after the register closed).

We always aim to work closely with our parents and to support them. Therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel that you feel I should be are of, please contact me to discuss it.

With regards,

**Below 85%**

Re: Significant Attendance Concern

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I am writing to make you aware that \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance has fallen to \_\_\_\_\_%. This is significantly below Bradfield's threshold for good attendance of 95%.

You may not be aware that absences of any kind – illness and holiday – all count towards your child's overall attendance record. Lateness may also count as absence. In the event your child arrives at school late, but before the register closes, they are noted as late, and the number of minutes late will be recorded. In the event your child arrives at school late and the register has closed, they are counted as having half a day unauthorised absence.

I enclose a copy of \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance record for your information. Unauthorised absences are coded as O, G (unauthorised holiday) and U (Late after the register closed).

We always aim to work closely with our parents and to support them. Therefore, if you have any queries concerning the report, or if there are any particular medical or family circumstances that you feel that you feel I should be are of, please contact me to discuss it.

We would like to meet with you discuss \_\_\_\_\_'s attendance further and decide on an action plan going forward. Please could you contact the school office as a matter of urgency to book in a time which is convenient for you.

With regards,