

ATTENDANCE POLICY 2020-21

Brook Primary School

PLEASE SEE School Attendance Addendum: in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) ADDED TO THE END OF THE POLICY

Introduction:

This is a successful school and your child plays their part in making it so. We aim for an environment which enables and encourages all members of the community to reach out for excellence. For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and your child should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable.

It is very important therefore that you make sure that your child attends regularly and this Policy sets out how together we will achieve this.

Why Regular Attendance is so important:

Learning: - Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence disrupts teaching routines so may affect the learning of others in the same class.

Ensuring your child's regular attendance at school is your legal responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Safeguarding: - Your child may be at risk of harm if they do not attend school regularly. Safeguarding the interests of each child is everyone's responsibility and within the context of this school, we will adhere to 'Working together to Safeguard Children' (July 2018) Keeping Children Safe in Education (2020) and School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy:

Protecting children from maltreatment.

Preventing impairment of children's health or development.

Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.

Taking action to enable all children have the best life chances.

Detecting early support through Early Help Assessment.

Failing to attend this school on a regular basis will be considered as a safeguarding matter.

Promoting Regular Attendance:

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

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our regular Newsletter;
- Report to you at least half-termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainments;
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements;
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates and outings/events.

The Law relating to attendance

Section 7 of the Education Act 1996 states that *'the parent of every child of compulsory school age shall cause him / her to receive efficient full time education suitable:-*

(a) to age, ability and aptitude and

(b) to any special educational needs he/ she may have

Either by regular attendance at school or otherwise'

The Law relating to safeguarding

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and students under the age of 18.

Understanding types of absence:

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required, preferably in writing.

Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as genuine illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause.

Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no "leave" has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Local Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings. This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily
- Truancy before or during the school day
- Absences which have never been properly explained
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark
- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays
- Unauthorised leave of absence/holiday or day trips in term time.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If your child is reluctant to attend, it is never better to cover up their absence or to give in to pressure to excuse them from attending. This gives the impression that attendance does not matter and usually make things worse.

Any student in Brook Primary School identified as having **attendance below 93%** will have all further absence **unauthorised** on schools register.

However, should parent(s) provide evidence from a medical practitioner advising that the period of absence was necessary, the absence for the evidenced period will be authorised.

The following national codes will be used to record attendance information.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/	Present (AM)	Present
\	Present (PM)	Present
B	Educated off site (NOT Dual registration)	Approved Education Activity
C	Other Authorized Circumstances (not covered by another appropriate code/description)	Authorized absence
D	Dual registration (i.e. pupil attending other establishment)	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded (no alternative provision made)	Authorized absence
F	Extended family holiday (agreed)	Authorized absence
G	Family holiday (NOT agreed or days in excess of agreement)	Unauthorized absence
H	Family holiday (agreed)	Authorized absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental etc. appointments)	Authorized absence
J	Interview	Approved Education Activity
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical/Dental appointments	Authorized absence
N	No reason yet provided for absence	Unauthorized absence
O	Unauthorized absence (not covered by any other code/description)	Unauthorized absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
R	Religious observance	Authorized absence
S	Study leave	Authorized absence
T	Traveler absence	Authorized absence
U	Late (after registers closed)	Unauthorized absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Untimetabled sessions for non-compulsory school-age pupils and CHILDREN NOT ATTENDING IN CIRCUMSTANCES RELATED TO COVID19	Not counted in possible attendances
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	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

Persistent Absenteeism (PA):

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's educational prospects and we need parents' fullest support and co-operation to tackle this.

We monitor all absence thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and you will be informed of this immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully through our pastoral system and we also combine this with academic mentoring where absence affects attainment.

Absence Procedures:

If your child is absent you must:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence; telephone 01384 818835
- *Please note "illness" alone is not acceptable – the specific type of illness must be stated;*
- If you have failed to make contact please send a note in on the first day they return with an explanation of the absence;

If your child is absent we will:

- Text you on the morning of the first day of absence;
- If we have not heard from you we will endeavor to make telephone contact;
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with our Attendance Support Officer and/or a member of the senior management team if absences persist;
- If necessary refer the matter to our Attendance Support Officer and/or the Local Authority if attendance moves below 95%.

Parent/Carers Telephone numbers:

There are times when we need to contact parents about lots of things, including absence. We need to have your contact numbers at all times. So help us to help you and your child by making sure we always have an up to date number – if we don't then something important may be missed. **You have a duty to notify school as soon as possible of any changes to contact details.**

Attendance Concerns:

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be resolved this way, the school may discuss matters with our appointed Attendance Support Officer. He/she will discuss matters and try to resolve the situation by agreement. However, if your child's attendance does not improve and unauthorized absences persist school may refer the case to our Independent Attendance Officer, or to the local authority who are a statutory service who issue sanctions such as Penalty Notices or refer the case for prosecution in the Magistrates Court, based on the evidence provided by the school.

Parents can contact the Local authority themselves (Education Investigation Service) on 01384 814317. For general information regarding school absence visit: www.dudley.gov.uk

School Attendance Strategies:

- **Weekly attendance analysis**
- **Improved attendance letter**
- **Attendance certificates**
- **Attendance assemblies**
- **Interventions (thrive/meet and greet)**
- **Maintaining positive communication (school refuser/long term illness etc)**
- **First day absence contact**
- **Unexplained absence letter**
- **Punctuality letter**
- **Suspected holiday in term time letter**
- **Issue below 95% attendance letter**
- **Issue below 93% attendance letter (medical evidence required)**
- **Issue below 90% (persistent absence) letter**
- **Attendance clinics**
- **Home visits**
- **LEA referrals**

The School Day: PLEASE SEE School Attendance Addendum: in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19) ADDED TO THE END OF THE POLICY

The school day starts at 8:45am and we expect your child to be in class at that time.

Registers will be marked at 8:50am and your child will receive a 'L' late mark if they are not present in the class.

The register will be closed 30 minutes after school's start time. In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after that time they will receive a 'U' mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If unauthorised lateness persists it could result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or enforcement proceedings against you.

Late Arrivals must to be signed in via the main school office. Children in Reception, Year 1,

Year 2, Year 3 and Year 4 **must** be accompanied by an adult. Only children in Year 5 and Year 6 are able to sign in unaccompanied.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable. If your child misses the start of the day they can miss work and do not spend time with their class teacher getting vital information and news for the day. Late arriving pupils also disrupt lessons. This can be embarrassing for the child and can encourage absence.

If your child has a persistent late record you will be asked to meet with a member of school staff and/or Attendance Support Officer to resolve the problem, but you can approach us at any time if you are having problems getting your child to school on time.

Our school day ends at 3.20pm for Reception and KS1 Pupils, and at 3.30 for pupils in KS2.

When children need to come and go during the school day they must be signed in and out at the school office. **This is an exceptionally important procedure to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff in the event of fire or an emergency.**

Holidays in Term Time/Leave of Absence:

Taking holidays in term time will affect your child's schooling as much as any other absence and we expect parents to help us by not taking children away in school time.

Remember that any savings you think you may make by taking a holiday in school time are offset by the cost to your child's education.

"It is a rule of this school that a leave of absence shall not be granted in term time unless there are exceptional reasons, irrespective of the child's overall attendance. Only the head teacher (not the Local Authority) or his/her designate may authorise such a request and all applications for a leave of absence must be made in writing/on a form provided by the school. Where a parent takes a leave of absence to which the application was refused or takes a leave of absence where no application was made to the school, the issue of a penalty fine (upon a return from such leave) by the Local Authority may be requested. When requesting a fixed penalty fine the school may calculate the period of days taken within a 12 week period"

There is no automatic entitlement in law to time off in school time to go on holiday and the government made an amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 in September 2013 to reflect this.

Leave of absence shall not be considered unless –

- (a) an application has been made in advance to the Headteacher by a parent with whom the pupil normally resides: and
- (b) the Headteacher, or a person authorised by the Headteacher in accordance with paragraph (1), considers that leave of absence should be granted due to the exceptional circumstances relating to that application.

In light of the changes to the Pupil Registration Regulations, Brook Primary School will only grant leave where parents can prove exceptional circumstances.

All applications must be made in writing to the Head Teacher at least 5 school days prior to the requested leave date.

Where the decision is made not to authorise leave in term time, school will inform parent/carers in writing. A general guide for parent's, is leave for any holiday, activity or event that could be arranged during the annual 13 week holiday time would not be authorised.

On any occasion that school refuses a request for leave in term time, should parent/carers proceed with the leave it will be recorded as a (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement), on schools register.

Failure to notify and/or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least 5 day notice will result in all absence being recorded as (O) (unauthorised absence not covered by any other description).

If a pupil does not return to school after the leave of absence date, school will investigate the reasons surrounding the absence, refer to the Local Authority and under Regulation 8, 1 (f) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 consider removal from the school register.

School targets, projects and special initiatives:

The school has targets to improve attendance and your child has an important part to play in meeting these targets.

The minimum level of attendance for this school is **96%** attendance and we will keep you updated regularly about progress to this level and how your child's attendance compares. Our target is to achieve better than this however because we know that good attendance is the key to children fulfilling their potential.

Those people responsible for attendance matters in this school are:

(Roles & Responsibilities/School Procedures)

Mrs Marie Fellows- Head Teacher
Mr Matthew Allen- Deputy Headteacher
Miss S Nicklin- Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mr P Simpson- Chair of Governors

Mr P Weston (Independent Attendance Officer)
Mrs D Felton (Attendance Administration)

Summary:

All school staff are committed to working with parents and pupils as the best way to guarantee as high a level of attendance as possible and that through good attendance ensure every child's welfare and life opportunities are promoted.

Date of Policy/Review: September 2020



**School Attendance Addendum: in relation to coronavirus (COVID-19)
during the 2020 to 2021 academic year**

We look forward to school re-opening to all years and your child/ren returning. These guidelines are in conjunction with the Government and full documents can be obtained on the gov.uk website. Please contact school if you have any concerns as we are here to support you and your children in a safe return to school.

Attendance expectations (Department for Education 2020)

From the start of the autumn term 2020 **pupil attendance will be mandatory** and the usual rules on attendance will apply, including:

- parents' duty to ensure that their child of compulsory school age attends regularly at the school where the child is a registered pupil
- schools' responsibilities to record attendance and follow up absence
- the ability to issue sanctions, including fixed penalty notices, in line with local authorities' codes of conduct

Attendance and marking of the register

There will be some circumstances, related to Covid – 19, where pupils cannot attend. In view of this a new category of non-attendance has been added – 'not attending in circumstances related to Covid-19'. This will be recorded using code X. This code will not count as an absence, authorised or unauthorised, for statistical purposes.

Examples of the circumstance to which this code will apply include:

- Pupils who are required to self-isolate as they, or a member of their household, has symptoms or confirmed Covid-19
- Pupils who are required to self-isolate because they are a close contact of someone who has symptoms or confirmed Covid-19
- Pupils who are required by legislation to self-isolate as part of a period of quarantine
- Pupils who are clinically extremely vulnerable in a future local lockdown scenario only (for example, has cancer)

Please keep in contact with school. Once it is safe to do so school will expect you provide any evidence to help support us in managing the risks to keep children, staff, families and the wider community safe.

Any non-attendance where contact cannot be established will be deemed as a safeguarding matter and school will follow the attendance and safeguarding procedures.

School Census

This will resume in January 2021 to collect data for the Autumn Term 2020. Attendance and absence codes will be collected.

COVID Symptoms and Testing

The most important symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

If your child has symptoms of Coronavirus you should arrange for them to be tested immediately.

- If the test is **negative** they should return to school as long as they feel well. (*If they feel unwell this will be recorded as illness*).
- If the test is **positive** they should self-isolate for at least 10 days from when the symptoms started and return to school when the symptoms have gone. (*If they continue to have a cough or loss of smell/taste they may return to school because these symptoms often continue for several weeks after the infection has gone.*) Code X should be used for the period of self-isolation until the test. After the pupil tests positive they should be recorded as code I (illness) until they are able to return to school.

If someone in the child's household has symptoms they should arrange to be tested.

- If the test is negative the child should return to school.
- If the test is positive the child should self-isolate for 14 days from the onset of the person's symptoms.

How to get a test

A test needs to be taken **in the first 5 days of the onset of symptoms**. Apply online at **GOV.UK** or ring **119** if you are having problems online.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/get-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>

School should be informed immediately about test results.

If you have been in close contact with someone who has symptoms or confirmed Coronavirus.

If you are contacted by the NHS track and trace service you will need to self-isolate for 14 days.

Stay at home guidance for households

If you need to self-isolate your household members must stay at home. You should not go to work, school, GP, Pharmacy or public places. Do not use taxis or public transport. Arrange for food and essentials to be brought to you and exercise should be taken in the garden.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Shielding

Shielding advice for all adults and children paused on 1 August 2020. Children on the shielding list can return to school, as can those who have family members who are shielding. If local conditions cause this to change you will be notified via a government issued letter. This should be shared with school.

Specialists in paediatric medicine have reviewed the evidence on the level of risk posed to children and young people from COVID-19. The latest evidence indicates that the risk of serious illness for most children and young people is low. (digital NHS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19#definition>

Leave of Absence/holidays/quarantine

Holidays should be arranged for school holiday periods **not term time**. Please be aware that you may need to self-isolate if you take a holiday to a destination which requires quarantine. **Both the holiday and quarantine time will NOT BE AUTHORISED.**

Remote education

School have the responsibility to provide remote learning opportunities to those pupils not attending due to Covid-19.

Helpline

Department for Education COVID-19 helpline relating to education and children's social care. Staff, parents and young people can contact this helpline by calling: 0800 046 8687. Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 8am to 6pm.

If you are in self-isolation as a household, struggling as a family and have no other means of support please contact school. We have a variety of internal and external support workers who may be able to help.

Changes to the School Day

In line with government guidance, to reduce contacts and maximise distancing between those in school we are staggering drop off and collection times for each year group.

<u>Year Group</u>	<u>Drop off/collection point</u>	<u>Timings for drop off and collection</u>
Butterflies	Usual entrance	Am- 8.30am-11.30am Pm- 12.15pm-3.15pm
RD	Door to RD classroom, through the gate to the left of the main entrance.	8.35am drop off 3.15pm collection
RR	Door to RD classroom, through the gate to the left of the main entrance.	8.30am drop off 3.10pm collection
1E	Entrance opposite 1E classroom	8.45am drop off 3.25pm collection

1H	Entrance opposite 1E classroom	8.50am drop off 3.30pm collection
2C	Y2 cloak room entrance	8.45am drop off 3.25pm collection (T will meet class on KS2 playground)
2D	Y2 cloak room entrance	8.45am drop off 3.25pm collection (T will meet class on KS2 playground)
3H	Y3 Fire Exit in corridor leading to 3B	8.30am drop off 3.15pm collection (T will meet class on KS1 playground)
3B	Y3 Fire Exit in corridor leading to 3B	8.30am drop off 3.15pm collection (T will meet class on KS1 playground)
4H	Y4 Fire Exit end of the KS2 corridor	8.30am drop off 3.15pm collection (T will meet class on KS2 playground)
4T	Y4 Fire Exit end of the KS2 corridor	8.30am drop off 3.15pm collection (T will meet class on KS2 playground)
5B	Year 3/4 cloakroom	8.45am drop off 3.30pm collection (T will meet class on KS1 playground)
5C	Year 3/4 cloakroom	8.45am drop off 3.30pm collection (T will meet class on KS1 playground)
6W	Year 5/6 cloakroom	8.50am drop off 3.30pm collection (Main Front Office Doors)
6Wa	Year 5/6 cloakroom	8.50am drop off 3.30pm collection (Main Front Office Doors)

(L) Late marks will only be given to children who arrive after 9am which is 10 minutes after the latest drop off time.

In accordance with the Regulations, if your child arrives after 9.10am they will receive a 'U' mark that shows them to be on site, but this will **not** count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence. If unauthorised lateness persists it could result in a referral to the Local Authority for consideration of a Penalty Notice or enforcement proceedings against you.