Attendance Policy

Marie Fellows
Head teacher
October 2026

1. Introduction:

This policy outlines Brook Primary School's approach to managing and improving pupil attendance. We believe that regular and punctual attendance is crucial for pupils to maximise their learning opportunities, achieve their full potential, and develop essential skills for future success.

This policy is designed to:

- Promote a positive culture of attendance.
- Establish clear expectations for pupils, parents/carers, and staff.
- Provide a consistent and supportive framework for managing attendance.
- Address barriers to attendance and provide appropriate interventions.
- Meet all statutory requirements and guidance related to school attendance in England.

At our school, we are committed to building strong partnerships with parents and carers. We value the relationship between home and school, and we work closely with our wider community to help drive the school forward. Together, we aim to ensure that every child in our care has the opportunity to reach their full potential. You and your child(ren) play a vital role in the success of our school.

For children to achieve the best possible outcomes from their education, regular attendance is essential. Your child should attend school on time, every day it is open, unless there is a genuine and unavoidable reason for their absence. As stated by the Department for Education, *"Attendance is everyone's business"* (DfE, 2022), and this policy outlines how we can work together to support consistent and punctual attendance.

Our whole-school attendance target is 96% or above. This equates to no more than seven days of absence over the course of the academic year. By working together, we can help every child maintain excellent attendance and make the most of their time in school.

Good attendance is a learned behaviour, and it plays a crucial role in a child's overall success. Research consistently shows that children with the highest levels of attendance achieve the strongest academic

outcomes and benefit from greater opportunities later in life. Every absence disrupts the continuity of a child's learning, and regular or prolonged absences can significantly impact their progress and achievement.

Improving attendance is a collective responsibility. Attendance cannot be viewed in isolation from safeguarding, SEND, behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, curriculum engagement and family support. Brook Primary School adopts a whole-school approach in which every member of staff plays a role in promoting excellent attendance and removing barriers to attendance.

2. Legislative Framework and Guidance

This policy is informed by the following legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 1996
- Children Act 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance (July 2026)
- Relevant local authority guidance on school attendance

It is the legal responsibility of the registered parent or carer to ensure their child attends school regularly. Failure to do so may result in legal action under the Education Act 1996.

There are two main offences under this legislation:

- **Section 444(1)** of the Education Act 1996 – where a parent/carer fails to ensure regular attendance without reasonable justification. This offence can result in a **fine of up to £1,000**.
- **Section 444(1A)** – a more serious offence where a parent/carer knowingly allows their child to miss school without justification. This is an aggravated offence, punishable by a fine of up to £2,500 and/or a term of imprisonment.

In addition, the Local Authority has the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices for unauthorised absences, including cases where leave of absence has not been approved.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Effective attendance management requires a collaborative approach. The following individuals and groups have specific responsibilities:

- **Governing Body:**
  - Ensuring the school has a clear and effective attendance policy.
  - Monitoring school attendance data and holding the headteacher to account for improving attendance.
  - Ensuring the school is meeting its statutory duties regarding attendance.
- **Headteacher & Senior Attendance Champion (Mrs M Fellows):**
  - Overall responsibility for implementing the attendance policy.
  - Monitoring school attendance data and identifying trends.
  - Working with staff, parents/carers, and external agencies to improve attendance.
  - Strategic oversight of attendance management.
  - Leading the development and implementation of attendance improvement strategies.
  - Liaising with the local authority and other external agencies.
  - Ensuring attendance has a high profile across the school.

    - Reporting attendance trends to governors.
    - Coordinating targeted attendance strategies.
    - Promoting an attendance culture where all staff contribute to improving attendance.
    - Ensuring robust attendance monitoring arrangements are in place for pupils attending alternative provision and other approved educational activities.

- **Admin Assistant Responsible for Attendance (Mrs D Felton):**
    - Managing day-to-day attendance procedures.
    - Contacting parents/carers regarding unexplained absences.
    - Maintaining accurate attendance records.
    - Providing administrative support for attendance-related matters.
- **Class Teachers:**
    - Promoting the importance of attendance to pupils.
    - Taking accurate registers at the start of each session.
    - Following up on pupil absences and reporting concerns to the Attendance Officer.
    - Providing a welcoming and engaging learning environment.
- **Pastoral Staff (Mrs A Wilson & Miss C Jones):**
    - Providing support to pupils and families facing attendance challenges.
    - Liaising with external agencies to provide targeted interventions.
    - Developing individual attendance plans for pupils with persistent absence.
- **Pupils:**
    - Attending school regularly and punctually.
    - Informing a teacher or other member of staff if they are experiencing difficulties that could affect their attendance.
- **Parents/Carers:**
    - Ensuring their child attends school regularly and punctually.
    - Informing the school promptly of any reason for absence.
    - Providing medical evidence for prolonged or frequent absences due to illness.
    - Working with the school to address any attendance concerns.
    - Avoiding taking holidays during term time.
    - Book routine medical appointments outside of school (where possible) or bring your child in for part of the school day when possible.
    - Engage with school, attendance support and the Local Authority if your child's attendance starts to deteriorate.
    - Engage with further support offered, such as attendance support and family liaison visits, Early help, parenting contracts and the Local Authority to prevent further legal action.

Our Senior Attendance Champion, Mrs M Fellows can be contacted via our email address: info@brook.dudley.sch.uk- please add the subject: FAO Mrs Fellows- Attendance Champion.

4. Safeguarding:

Regular school attendance is not only essential for your child's education, but also for their safety and wellbeing. A child who does not attend school regularly may be at increased risk of harm. Safeguarding the welfare of every child is everyone's responsibility, and as a school, we are committed to fulfilling our duty under key statutory guidance, including *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (2026), *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2026), and our own Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Within this framework, safeguarding includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of their mental and physical health or development

- Ensuring children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to ensure all children have the best possible outcomes
- Identifying the need for support early, either through school-based strategies or an Early Help Assessment
-

Under **Section 175 of the Education Act 2002**, Local Authorities and school governing bodies have a legal duty to consider guidance issued by the Secretary of State in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people under the age of 18.

Unexplained or persistent absence from school may be treated as a safeguarding concern and, in some cases, could fall under the category of **educational neglect**.

5. Attendance Expectations and Procedures

5.1 Attendance and Punctuality Expectations

- Pupils are expected to attend school every day that it is open, unless there is a valid reason for absence (e.g., illness, medical appointment).
- The school day starts at 8:50am and ends at 3.30pm. Pupils are expected to be in their classrooms ready to learn by the start time. The doors open at 8:45am to allow children time to hang up their belongings.
- Registers are taken at the start of each morning and afternoon session. The register closes at 9.20am for the morning session and 1pm (KS1) and 1.15pm (KS2) for the afternoon session. Pupils arriving after the register has closed will be marked as late. Pupils arriving after 9:20am will be U coded, which does have an impact on attendance.
- Persistent lateness is unacceptable and will be addressed in accordance with this policy.

5.2 Reporting Absence

Parents/carers must inform the school of the reason for their child's absence as soon as possible on the first day of absence. This can be done by:

- Telephone: 01384 389888
- Email: info@brook.dudley.sch.uk
- Face-to-face contact with the school office staff

If the school has not received notification of absence, the Attendance Officer, Mrs D Felton or a member of the school office staff will attempt to contact the parents/carers on the first day of absence.

If we are unable to make contact with a parent/carer and the absence persists without explanation, a member of SLT may conduct a home visit in line with safeguarding responsibilities. A home visit may also be conducted, if a holiday is suspected and/or a leave of absence has not been completed.

For absences of more than one day, parents/carers should continue to contact school every day to provide an update about the reasons why their child is unable to attend recognising an estimated return date.

Supporting medical evidence (e.g., doctor's appointment card, prescription) may be required for prolonged or frequent absences due to illness or where there is reasonable doubt about the authenticity of the illness.

5.3 Authorised and Unauthorised Absence

Authorised absence is absence that has been approved by the school. Examples of authorised absence include:

- Illness (with medical evidence if required)
- Medical appointments
- Religious observance
- Exceptional family circumstances (approved by the Headteacher)

Unauthorised absence 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. If absence that has not been approved by the school. Examples of unauthorised absence include:

- Holidays during term time (unless exceptional circumstances apply)
- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Absences which have never been properly explained or without a valid reason
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark (after class register has closed at 9.20am).
- Shopping, looking after other children, oversleeping, or birthdays.
- Truancy
- Absences of children whose attendance is a concern, and parents have been unable to supply medical evidence.
- Uniform issues
- Transport difficulties

The school will record all absences accurately and will distinguish between authorised and unauthorised absences.

5.4 Leave of Absence Requests

- Parents/carers must request leave of absence in advance by completing a Leave of Absence Request Form (available from the school office).
- Leave of absence will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- The Headteacher will consider each request on a case-by-case basis, considering the reason for the request, and the potential impact on the pupil's education.
- Parents/carers will be informed of the outcome of their request in writing.
- Taking holidays during term time is strongly discouraged and will generally be recorded as unauthorised absence. Fixed Penalty Notices will be issued for unauthorised holidays in term time.
- Parent/carer must notify the school at least 10 days prior to travel via a school leave of absence/holiday form. There have been occasions where parents have taken holiday without notifying school or said their child is off due to illness. We politely request parents are honest with school as this causes a large amount of time wasted, undertaking calls, home visits and even referrals to children missing education.
- Failure to apply for a leave of absence in advance will automatically result in absence being coded as unauthorised. A school cannot grant leave retrospectively.

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 circumstances**, 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 an application 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 10-school 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 granted unless –

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

All applications must be made in writing to the Head Teacher at least 10 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 parents, is leave for any holiday, activity or event for the purpose of leisure and recreation 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 school's register.

Failure to notify and/or request leave of absence in term time, providing at least 10 days notice will result in all absence being recorded as (G) (family holiday not agreed or in excess of agreement).

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 9, 1(i) of The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.
- May consider removal from the school register.

5.5 Education Off-Site and Alternative Provision

Brook Primary School may arrange for pupils to attend approved educational activities, alternative provision, sporting activities, work experience placements, educational visits or other off-site learning opportunities. Pupils attending approved educational activities, alternative provision or education off-site will remain on the school roll, and attendance will be monitored in partnership with the provider. Appropriate attendance codes will be used in accordance with DfE guidance.

The school will maintain regular communication with providers to ensure that pupils are attending as expected, are safe, and are making progress in their education. Any attendance concerns will be followed up promptly in line with this policy and safeguarding procedures.

5.6 Illness

Every half-day absence (either morning or afternoon) must be classified by the school—not by parents—as either **authorised** or **unauthorised**. It is therefore essential that parents provide a clear explanation for any absence, preferably in writing, as soon as possible.

While illness is sometimes unavoidable, children can occasionally be reluctant to attend school for a variety of reasons. In such cases, it is important not to excuse or conceal the absence. Doing so may increase your child's anxiety and make it harder for them to re-engage with school in the long term.

If your child is experiencing difficulties with attending school, we encourage you to contact us at the earliest opportunity. Early communication allows us to work together and offer appropriate support for both you and your child.

Where attendance is a concern, the school may request medical evidence to support future absences. Decisions regarding the authorisation of absence will always be made on a case-by-case basis and in line with DfE attendance guidance. Where a pupil's attendance falls below 90%, medical evidence is likely to be requested to support future absences so that the school can accurately assess and respond to attendance concerns. Where evidence confirms that absence was necessary due to health reasons, the school will authorise the relevant period of absence.

If a child becomes unwell while at school, staff will monitor their symptoms, which may include checking their temperature. The child will be encouraged to drink plenty of fluids and, if appropriate, to use the bathroom. Staff will make every effort to support the child so they can remain in school comfortably. This may involve contacting a parent to discuss the possible administration of medication (e.g. Calpol or Piriton), which will only be given with prior parental consent. If it is determined that the child is too unwell to stay in school, parents will be contacted and asked to collect their child. Should a child remain in school despite showing mild symptoms, parents will be informed of this at the end of the day.

6. Promoting and Incentivising Good Attendance

Brook Primary School recognises the importance of promoting and incentivising good attendance. We will:

- Celebrate good attendance through:
  - Attendance certificates
  - Our weekly attendance spinner award
  - Prizes and stickers
  - Recognition in school assemblies
  - Positive feedback to pupils and parents/carers

- Promote the benefits of good attendance through:
  - School newsletters
  - Parent/carer meetings
  - Classroom discussions
  - Displays and posters

- Create a welcoming and engaging learning environment that encourages pupils to attend school regularly.

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is “everybody’s business” (DFE 2022) - parents, pupils, all members of school staff and the LA. To achieve excellent attendance school will follow the DFE guidance “working together to improve attendance” (DFE 2026)

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give you details on attendance in our regular Newsletter.
- Report to you at least termly on how your child is performing in school, what their attendance and punctuality rate is and how this relates to their attainment.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements.
- Reward good or improving attendance through class competitions, certificates, and outings/events.
- Contact and work with you if we have concerns about your child’s attendance.

7. Monitoring and Analysing Attendance Data

The school will regularly monitor and analyse attendance data to identify patterns and trends. Attendance data will be used to:

- Identify pupils at risk of persistent absence.
- Target attendance improvement efforts to the pupils or pupil cohorts who need it most.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of attendance interventions.
- Inform school improvement planning.

Attendance analysis will include vulnerable groups and identified cohorts to ensure support can be targeted effectively and attendance inequalities reduced. Attendance data will be shared with the governing body, local authority, and other relevant stakeholders.

8. Removing Barriers to Attendance

At Brook Primary School, we recognise that poor attendance is often a symptom of an underlying difficulty rather than the problem itself. We are committed to understanding and addressing the barriers that may prevent pupils from attending school regularly and punctually. These barriers may include special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), physical or mental health needs, anxiety-based school avoidance (including emotionally based school avoidance), family circumstances, safeguarding concerns, medical needs, transport difficulties, or other factors impacting a child or family's ability to engage with education.

Through strong relationships with pupils and families, regular communication, early identification of concerns, and a graduated approach to support, we will work collaboratively to remove barriers and improve attendance. Where appropriate, Attendance Support Plans, Early Help assessments, reasonable adjustments, referrals to external agencies, and targeted pastoral support will be implemented to ensure that every child has the opportunity to attend, achieve and thrive. While the school will fulfil its statutory responsibilities regarding attendance, our first priority will always be to understand the reasons for absence and provide support that enables pupils to access their education successfully.

9. Addressing Persistent and Severe Absence & Lateness

A pupil is considered a **Persistent Absentee (PA)** when they miss **10% or more** of school across the academic year, regardless of the reason. Pupils who miss **50% or more** of school are classed as **severely absent**. Absence at these levels has a significant impact on a child's education and can seriously hinder their progress, achievement, and long-term opportunities. Addressing this requires the full support and cooperation of parents and carers.

Persistent absentees are closely tracked and monitored through our pastoral systems. Where attendance concerns begin to affect academic progress, we may also provide targeted academic mentoring and support. If your child reaches the threshold for persistent absence—or is at risk of doing so—you will be contacted. These cases are treated as a high priority, and we work proactively with families and external partners to identify and address any barriers to regular attendance.

Brook Primary School is committed to reducing persistent and severe absence.

We will:

- Identify pupils at risk of persistent absence (defined as 90% or below attendance).
- Implement early interventions to address the underlying causes of absence.
- Work closely with parents/carers to develop individual attendance plans.
- Involve external agencies (e.g., Educational Support Officer, social care, health services) when necessary.
- Escalate concerns to the local authority in cases of persistent or severe absence where support is not successful or not engaged with.
- Consider legal action (e.g., Fixed Penalty Notices, Education Supervision Orders) as a last resort.

Attendance Support Plan

An Attendance Support Plan is a supportive and structured approach used to help improve a pupil's attendance when concerns have been identified. The plan is developed in collaboration with the school, the pupil, and their parent(s)/carer(s), and outlines clear expectations, agreed targets, and specific actions to address any barriers to regular attendance. It may also involve referrals to internal or external support services if appropriate. Attendance Support Plans are regularly reviewed to monitor progress and ensure that the pupil is receiving the right level of support to improve and maintain good attendance, alongside evaluating the effectiveness of support and ensure the views of the pupil and family are considered throughout the process.

Punctuality matters just as much as attendance.

Poor punctuality is not acceptable, as it can have a negative impact on a child's learning and overall school experience. Regular attendance and punctual arrival help to establish good habits, promote responsibility, and support the development of a positive attitude toward school life.

Arriving late can be stressful for both the child and the parent, and it sets a disruptive tone for the day. Children who are late miss valuable learning time, including key instructions at the start of lessons, and their late arrival can interrupt the flow of the class and affect the progress of others.

We ask all parents and carers to support us in ensuring that children arrive at school on time every day, ready to learn.

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.

10. Attendance and Pupils with Specific Needs

This policy applies to all pupils at Brook Primary School. However, the school recognises that some pupils may have specific needs that affect their attendance (e.g., pupils with disabilities, pupils with medical conditions).

The school will make reasonable adjustments to support these pupils and will work closely with parents/carers and other professionals to address any barriers to attendance. When attendance difficulties relate to a pupil's special educational needs, disability, physical health, mental health or emotional wellbeing, the school will consider reasonable adjustments and ensure attendance support is integrated with the graduated approach, SEN Support Plans, EHCP provision and external professional advice where appropriate.

The school will consider its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child when implementing this policy.

The school recognises that pupils with a social worker are among the most vulnerable to poor attendance and will receive enhanced monitoring and support where required.

The school recognises that young carers may face additional barriers to attendance. Where identified, the school will work with families and support services to minimise the impact on attendance and educational outcomes.

11. Pupils who are not statutory school age

Excellent attendance in the early years is just as important as it is during statutory schooling. Nursery, preschool, and Reception provide essential foundations for learning, supporting children's development through play, exploration, and structured routines. These early experiences help to build social skills, independence, confidence, and a positive attitude towards school life.

If your child has been offered a place in our school nursery, preschool, or Reception class, regular attendance is expected. The school follows the same safeguarding procedures for all children, regardless of age. Parents and carers must notify the school of any absence due to unavoidable circumstances. Failure to do so may trigger safeguarding protocols and could put your child's place at risk.

12. Statutory Referrals to the Local Authority

If your child's attendance does not improve and unauthorised absences continue, the school may refer the case to **Dudley Council's School Attendance and Education Support Service (SA&ESS)**. This is a statutory service responsible for enforcing school attendance and other legal interventions relating to children in employment, entertainment, elective home education, and those missing from education. SA&ESS has the legal authority to issue the following enforcement measures:

- **Parenting Order**
- **Education Supervision Order**
- **School Attendance Order**
- **Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs)**:
    - The **first penalty notice** issued to a parent/carer for a specific child is £160 if paid within 28 days, reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days.

- A **second penalty notice** for the same child and same parent/carer is charged at a flat rate of **£160** (no reduction), payable within 28 days.
- A **third penalty notice** cannot be issued within a three-year period. If the national threshold is reached again during that time, alternative action will be taken—this may include prosecution or other statutory interventions.

Parents/carers may contact SA&ESS directly for advice or clarification via **Dudley MBC's MyDudley platform**:
👉 https://my.dudley.gov.uk
For general information about school attendance and absence, visit:
👉 https://www.dudley.gov.uk/residents/learning-and-school/education-support-service/

12. Children Missing in Education

"A pupil's name can only be deleted from the admission register for a reason set out in regulation 9 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

If you move out of area and the distance is too far to travel to School, **please notify us immediately and fill in a removal from roll form (obtained from school)**. We advise you contact the admissions department (of the Local Authority where you now reside) as quickly as possible to obtain a new school place, as often places are limited.

All schools must notify their local authority when they are about to remove a pupil's name from the school admission register. If your child ceases to attend school and we have had no contact from parent, we will deem this as a safeguarding issue. We will try to contact you and may undertake a home visit. We will then follow the Local Authority referral procedure for a child missing education before removal from roll.

13. 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.

- This policy will be published on the school website and will be easily accessible to leaders, staff, pupils, and parents.
- Parents/carers will be sent a copy of this policy with any initial information when pupils join the school and will be reminded of it at the beginning of each school year and when it is updated.
- The policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if national guidance, legislation or local authority procedures change in consultation with staff, parents/carers, and pupils.
- Feedback on the policy is welcome and should be directed to the Headteacher.

14. Links to Other Policies

This policy is linked to the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Appendix i: National Codes

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

CODE	DESCRIPTION	MEANING
/ \	Present in school / = am, \ = pm	Present
B	Off-site educational activity e.g., taster day at another school	Approved Education Activity
C	Authorised absence granted school	Authorised absence
C1	Authorised Regulated Performance	Authorised absence
C2	Temporary reduced timetable agreed by the school and reviewed regularly.	Authorised absence
D	Dual registered at another school	Approved Education Activity
E	Excluded but no alternative provision made	Authorised absence
G	Holiday not granted by school or in excess of the period determined by school	Unauthorised absence
I	Illness (NOT medical or dental appointment)	Authorised absence
J1	Interview (employment or educational admission)	Approved Education Activity
K	Alternative provision (LA arranged)	Authorised absence
L	Late (before registers closed)	Present
M	Medical or Dental appointment	Authorised absence
N	Reason for absence not yet provided	Unauthorised absence
O	Absence without authorisation	Unauthorised absence
P	Approved sporting activity	Approved Education Activity
Q	Unable to attend because the pupil is unable to attend the school because it is not reasonably practicable to do so.	
R	Religious observance	Authorised absence
S	Study leave	Authorised absence
U	Arrived late after registration closed	Unauthorised absence
V	Educational visit or trip	Approved Education Activity
W	Work experience	Approved Education Activity
X	Non-compulsory school-age pupil not required to be in school	Not counted in possible attendances
Y1	Unable to attend ((transport normally provided not available)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y2	Unable to attend (widespread disruption to travel)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y3	Unable to attend (part of the school closed)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y4	Unable to attend (whole school closed)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y5	Unable to attend (sentence of detention)	Not counted in possible attendances
Y6	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances
Y7	Absent in accordance with public health guidance or law	Not counted in possible attendances
Z	Pupil not on roll	Not collected for statistical purposes
#	Planned whole or partial school closure	Not counted in possible attendances

Appendix ii- National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: National Framework for Penalty Notices for school absence

I am taking this opportunity to remind you of the important changes the Department for Education introduced last year regarding school attendance and the issuing of penalty notices when children are absent from school. A National Framework for Penalty Notices has been being introduced. The regulations came into effect from the 19th of August 2024. The aim is to improve consistency in the use of penalty notices across England.

The national framework includes:

• A single consistent national threshold for when a penalty notice must be considered of ten sessions (usually equivalent to five school days) for any unauthorised absence within a rolling ten school week period. The 10-week period may span different terms or school years. For example, two sessions of unauthorised absence in the summer term and a further eight during the autumn term.

• An increase to the rate of a penalty notices from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days. If a second penalty notice is issued to the same parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, the notice will be charged at the higher rate of £160 with no option for this second offence to be discharged at £80.

• A national limit of two penalty notices that can be issued to a parent for the same child within a rolling three-year period, so at the 3rd (or subsequent) offence(s) another tool must be considered (such as prosecution or another attendance legal interventions).

Please be aware that new legislation does not allow schools to authorise any holidays in term time or authorise leave retrospectively.

We believe that good attendance is essential to support your child in getting the most out of their education and we thank you for your continued support.

If you have any concerns about your child's attendance, please don't hesitate to contact the school and ask to speak to Mrs Felton our Attendance Lead, who will be able to offer support for your child and family.

Appendix iii- FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why does attendance matter?
FACT: Being in school is important to your child's achievement, wellbeing, wider development and mental health.

- Every moment in school counts, and days missed add up quickly.
- For the vast majority of students, the best place to be during term-time is in school, surrounded by the support of their friends, teachers and other support staff.
- There is plenty of time for them (and you) to do other things together. Did you know that your child is only at school for 52% of a calendar year … the rest of the time is yours!

FACT: Missing school = lost learning time & makes learning much more difficult for students

Why has the Department for Education brought in a National Framework for penalty notices?
There was concern that penalty notices (sometimes called fines) were being issued inconsistently across the county with some Council's issuing multiple penalty notices to a family within a year and some issuing none at all. This created a postcode lottery for families, so the framework has been introduced to ensure more fairness and consistency.

What is a penalty notice?
A penalty notice allows parents to discharge an offence by paying a one-off penalty without the matter being referred to court where they could receive fines of hundreds of pounds and a criminal record.

I've already applied for authorisation of leave this term but for a holiday in September 2024. If the school don't authorise the leave, will I have to pay £80 or £60, as I applied this academic year?
The new law will require any unauthorised absence from 19th August 2024 to be dealt with under the new regulations so it would be £80 for each child and each parent. For a family of four with two children, that would amount to £320 if paid within 21 days of receiving the penalty notice. If paid between day 22 and 28, it would be £640.

What if I have a family emergency or bereavement abroad?
Unexpected family emergencies do happen unfortunately and can be very upsetting. However, parents must notify the school themselves of the absence as soon as possible as messages from friends or relatives who don't have parental responsibility may not be accepted. Schools are not allowed to authorise leave retrospectively. Notifying the school doesn't mean the absence will be authorised though. In the case of a family emergency or bereavement abroad, parents are strongly encouraged to request authorisation from the school and ensure absence is no longer than 5 school days. The final decision about authorisation sits entirely with the Headteacher.

What if I receive a penalty notice and don't pay it?
The law states that the local authority must withdraw the penalty notices and prosecute the parents in court where they could each receive £2,500 fine, a parenting order, a criminal record and various costs awarded against them.

What happens if I pay a penalty notice for unauthorised leave next term but then take the children on another holiday the following year?
The new framework means that for a second offence within a three-year period, the discount of £80 per parent for each child won't apply. For a family of four with two children, that would amount to £640. A third period of unauthorised absence within a three-year period means that the local authority will be unable to issue another penalty notice and may instead refer the matter directly to Court.

I want to visit family abroad for six weeks next year. If the school doesn't authorise the absence, will I be issued with a penalty notice?
Any level of absence can have a serious impact on children's education, but lengthy absence can be particularly devastating. For that reason, it's unlikely that a penalty notice will be issued, and the matter may be referred directly to the Court instead.

What is 'good attendance' and why is it so important?
Generally good attendance is considered to be at least 96% for most children. Some parents think 90% attendance is good but that means a child will have missed at least 200 lessons over a year, lessons that will never be repeated. Since the pandemic, attainment and progress levels in schools have deteriorated along with attendance levels. This could mean that children today may leave school unable to be as competitive in the jobs market, so its important children attend school as much as possible.

Absence from school of any length can also have a negative impact on children's wellbeing, including their mental health. Worries about not being able to catch up, not understanding lessons, or impacts on friendships are all common in children who are absent from school. Children are sometimes absent due to genuine extreme physical or mental health needs, requiring support. In those circumstances, attending school as often as they can be acknowledged and celebrated.

I'm struggling to get my child to school. What help is available to me?
We are here to help. Please contact the school and ask for a meeting to discuss your concerns.

My child has special needs and has lots of hospital appointments which I have evidence for. Will I receive a penalty notice?
No. Penalty notices can only be issued where there is unauthorised absence, and those absences will be authorised. If your child is going to school as often as possible as you are working in partnership with the school, you will be doing the best you can to ensure your child gets a good education despite the circumstances.

What happens to the money for penalty notices when they are paid?
Currently the law requires penalty notice revenue to be spent on the administration of penalty notices which generally means, for example, any online payment software, electrical equipment such as laptops for issuing penalty notices and staffing costs. From 19th August 2024, local authorities will be able to use the revenue to support school attendance more widely, including promotional materials, etc. Penalty notice revenue must be ringfenced for attendance and cannot be used for wider council funding.

Appendix iV- Letter sent went attendance falls below 95%

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: *Child's name* **DOB:** *Add here* **Class:** *Add here*

As you are aware, at Brook we place great importance on good attendance and encourage all children to attend school every day in order to achieve their full potential.

Following our routine monitoring of attendance across the school, it has been identified that your child's attendance is a cause for concern and has fallen to [insert %] which means that they have missed _____ days at school. Enclosed you will find a summary of your child's attendance record, including punctuality and details of any authorised or unauthorised absences.

Regular attendance is a **legal** requirement, and poor attendance can significantly affect a child's learning, progress, and ability to take part in school life. In line with our school attendance policy, we inform parents whenever attendance falls below 95% so that we can work together to improve it.

We fully understand that children may be absent from school for genuine reasons, such as illness. However, if your child is experiencing frequent absence, we encourage you to contact us as early as possible so we can explore any concerns or barriers. Support is available through school staff, school health services, and Early Help where needed.

Please remember it is the responsibility of parents/carers to:

- Inform the school on the first day of absence and provide a reason.
- Share an expected return date.
- Provide medical evidence (e.g., doctor's notes or appointment details) where possible.

We will continue to closely monitor your child's attendance and very much hope to see an improvement. Working together, we can ensure your child gains the greatest benefit from their education and develops positive lifelong habits.

Thank you for your support.

Appendix V- Letter sent went attendance continues to decline

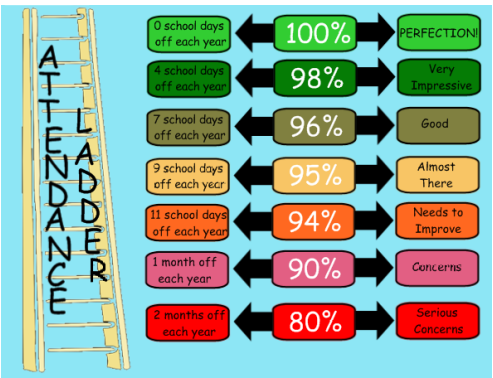
Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: *Child's name* **DOB:** *Add here* **Class:** *Add here*

As you are aware, at Brook we place great importance on good attendance and encourage all children to attend school on time, every day in order to achieve their full potential.

You will be aware that I have already shared my concerns regarding your child's attendance which has now fallen further to [insert %] which means that they have missed _____ days at school. Enclosed you will find a summary of your child's attendance record, including punctuality and details of any authorised or unauthorised absences.

Regular attendance is a **legal** requirement, and poor attendance can significantly affect a child's learning, progress, and ability to take part in school life. In line with our school attendance policy, we inform parents whenever attendance falls below 95% so that we can work together to improve it.



Our attendance ladder recognises that with _____% attendance, we have _____. This level of attendance is well below school's expectations. As a result of this poor attendance, in accordance with school's policy on absence, the decision has been made to continue not to authorise any further absence without receipt of supporting medical evidence. This can include a GP/practitioner note, appointment card and/or labelled medication.

We will continue to monitor your child's attendance. If unauthorised absences continue to accumulate, the matter may be referred to the Local Authority for consideration of a Fixed Penalty Notice or legal action.

In the meantime, we would like to invite you into school to discuss any barriers or circumstances that may be affecting your child's attendance. An appointment has been arranged for [insert date, time, and location here]. During this meeting, we will explore how we can support you and your child, including the possibility of Early Help services if appropriate.

Thank you for your support.

Appendix Vi- Letter sent to children who are not statutory school age

Dear Parent/Carer,

Re: *Child's name* **DOB:** *Add here* **Class:** *Add here*

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the importance of establishing strong attendance habits at this early stage in your child's education.

At present, your child has missed ___ days from school, resulting in ___% attendance. We aim that ALL children attend school at least 96% of the time and we are keen to support you to achieve this.

Regular attendance and punctuality not only help to instil good habits for the future but also encourage a positive attitude towards school and learning. The transition from 'below school age' to 'compulsory school age' is a key time for your child, and building these routines now will give them the best possible start.

Research clearly shows a link between attendance and children's progress. When children are in school consistently, they are more likely to settle well, feel part of the school community, and develop friendships and confidence. Conversely, irregular attendance can make it harder for children to adjust to routines and to take full advantage of the opportunities school provides.

We do understand that there are times when absence is unavoidable, such as illness. However, it is our duty as a school to monitor attendance closely and to remind families of the expectations we share.

By working together, we can help your child gain the greatest benefit from their education. If you feel there are any circumstances that may affect your child's attendance, please do not hesitate to speak to a member of the teaching staff or school leadership team. We are here to support you and your child in establishing these important routines.

Thank you for your continued support.

Appendix Vii- Letter of thanks sent when attendance improves

Dear [Child's Name] and Parent(s)/Carer(s),

Following a recent review of attendance, we are very pleased to note that **[Child's Name]'s** attendance has shown a significant improvement.

We would like to sincerely thank you for your ongoing support and commitment in ensuring they are attending school regularly. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed, and we truly appreciate the positive steps you've taken.

Excellent attendance plays a vital role in your child's learning, social development, and long-term success. Being in school every day helps them build confidence, keep up with their learning, and fully engage with school life. It's wonderful to see [Child's Name] benefitting from this consistency.

We will continue to monitor their attendance, as we do for all pupils, but felt it was important to acknowledge the progress made and to celebrate this positive change. We hope to see this upward trend continue.

Thank you once again for working in partnership with us to support your child's education.

Appendix Viii- An Attendance Support Plan

SECTION 1	**PUPIL DETAILS**	
	Name:	
	Year group, Tutor/Form group etc:	
	Any other key info:	
SECTION 2	**ATTENDANCE SUPPORT MEETING**	
	Date of meeting:	
	Attendees:	Role:
SECTION 3	**ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS & PATTERNS**	
	For example: current attendance %, identified patterns, lateness, summary of reasons for absence & explanations	
SECTION 4	**PUPIL ATTENDANCE TARGETS/EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE PLAN**	
	For example: no unauthorised absence in following 2-weeks, to increase attendance to 90% by the end of term, to arrive on time every day	
	What is the target for the end of term / next half term to be achieved? What do we want the plan to achieve?	
	What are the smaller, more measurable, achievable, realistic steps that need to be taken in the next 2 weeks, to show progress towards the longer-term target?	
	ATTENDANCE PUSH FACTORS – influences that push the pupil towards attending	
	Strengths & interests the plan could use to engage the pupil, for example: positive relationships in school (staff and pupils), subject strengths, specific positive behaviours shown, rewards & praise received, extra-curricular participation, engagement with other support agencies. What is working well?	
SECTION 6	**ATTENDANCE PULL FACTORS – influences that pull the pupil away from attending**	
	Identify areas of difficulty that may prevent good attendance, for example: travel or housing issues, morning routine conflicts, subject specific barriers, young carer responsibilities, bereavement, bullying or friendship issues, language barriers, recurring illness or injury, SEN, anxiety, EBSNA, diet, exclusions/behaviour. When the pupil isn't in school what are they doing?	

SECTION 7	GROUP MIND MAP – Who or what could help?
	Share ideas about the staff, family, friends, services or organisations who could provide the support needed ***Everyone should contribute.*** *Who could help? School nurses, Connexions, Hear4Youth, parenting classes, KOOTH, Young Minds, What centre, GP, CAMHS SPA, family members, support with transport. What could help? Key adult, counselling, better sleep routine, breakfast club, key lessons, time out card, EPS resources, school transfer or managed move.*

SECTION 8	EARLY HELP, PARENTING SUPPORT & FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE DISCUSSION
	Fully explain how an Early Help Assessment could support the family. If Early Help is declined, detail a full explanation why. Does an EH enabler need to be involved? Would a Family Group Conference be a suitable alternative to a full EHA? Would parenting support classes/workshops help? Record the parent/s and pupil's thoughts and responses.

SECTION 9	AGREED SCHOOL ACTIONS	
	For example: referrals to be made, adjustments to the curriculum or classes, phased return plan or temporary part-time attendance, identification of a key adult or mentor, nurture friendships, supporting participation in extra-curricular groups, careers advice, Inclusive Pathways, implementation of EBSNA strategies, implementation of rewards etc.	
	Staff signature/s:	
	AGREED PARENT ACTIONS	
	For example: morning & bedtime routines, limiting technology (When? How?), booking Dr's appointments, seeking support from SENDIASS, implementation of rewards & sanctions (What will they be?), communicating with the school in line with attendance policy, consenting to referrals etc.	
	•	
	Parent signature/s:	
	AGREED OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIONS i.e Social Worker, FSW, YOS	
	For example: Weekly morning home visits, establish routines and boundaries, supporting parent to contact services/agencies, onward referrals to specific services, explore interests, and ideas for hobbies outside the home.	
	Professional signature/s:	
	AGREED PUPIL ACTIONS	
	For example: morning and bedtime routines, screen time, engagement with other agencies, work with school nurse/SENCo/counsellor/FSW/Connexions etc, participation in extra-curricular activities, speak to an identified member of staff with concerns, complete homework, attend in correct uniform etc.	
	Pupil signature:	

SECTION	IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW	
	Start date:	Review date:

Date of Policy/Review: September 2026
Policy reviewed by: Mrs M Fellows in consultation with Mrs D Felton
Approved by Governors:
Next review due: October 2027