



Broadway Infant School

Attendance Policy

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Broadway Infant School Attendance Policy

Rationale

Regular attendance at school is essential for children as it promotes good learning, positive attitudes and maintains continuity in their education and their friendships. Children should be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason is unavoidable; permitting absence from school without a good reason is an offence by a parent.

Aims

- To maximise the attendance of all children.
- To provide an environment which encourages regular attendance and makes attendance and punctuality a priority for all those attending the school.
- To monitor and support children whose attendance is a cause for concern and work in partnership with parents and carers to resolve any difficulty.

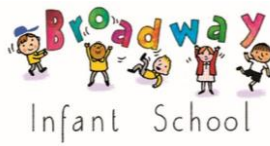
Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act a student is required to attend regularly at school where he or she is a registered student or the parents/carers could be liable for prosecution.

The school is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent/carer does not in itself authorise an absence. Only if the school is satisfied as to the validity of the explanation offered by the letter/message will the school consider authorising an absence. Previous attendance for the child will be taken into consideration when reaching a decision to authorise an absence. **The school will not authorise an absence for a child whose attendance is below 90%, unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

From September 2015 the Government regards any pupil with attendance below 90% as a 'persistent absentee'.

Every half day absence from school has to be classified by the school, (not by the parents) as either AUTHORISED OR UNAUTHORISED.



Absence

Authorised absence

Absence can be authorised if the pupil is away from school for a good reason such as illness or other unavoidable causes e.g. a day of religious observance, family bereavement, attending an approved off-site activity or special off-site tuition.

All absence starts as unauthorised until a reason is given and accepted by the school.

Unauthorised absence

Absence will be unauthorised if:

- No explanation has been given for absence.
- The school does not consider the absence as reasonable and for which no permission has been given, e.g. the pupil is away from school due to an exceptional circumstance for a period longer than agreed with the school; the pupil is on a family holiday without permission.

Absence during term time

The school policy is that all holidays/long weekends should be taken during school holidays. All absences from school during term time will be considered on an individual basis and a decision made on whether to authorise the absence. Requests for a holiday will only be granted when 'exceptional circumstances' can be demonstrated.

Parents / carers must complete a request for absence form on any occasion they intend to take their child out of the school during term time.

These must be made:

- On the school's 'Request for Taking Your Child Out of School During Term Time' form, clearly explaining the reason for absence.
- By the parent / carer who will be taking the pupil out of school.

Please note:

- No leave will be authorised for pupils in Year 1 during the statutory phonics assessment week in June or for Year 2 pupils during the Teacher Assessment period for Year 2 in May and June.
- Any absences in September at the beginning of the school year for any year group brings a particular disadvantage as it prevents a child from settling into the new term.

Parents/carers are urged not to request leave at these times of year.

Before considering granting any request for absence the Headteacher will take into account the following:

- The reason the request is being made
- The child's current level of school attendance
- Any previous requests for absence
- The child's punctuality



If the holiday absence is not authorised and the holiday is taken anyway, the school may request the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice fine.

A Penalty Notice may be issued to a parent in one or more of the following circumstances where more than 10 sessions of absence are recorded in 7 school weeks (70 sessions).

There are 2 sessions per day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon:

1. where unauthorised absences are recorded
2. where more than 10 sessions of unauthorised holiday are recorded and;
 - a) the parent has not informed the school; or
 - b) the leave was not authorised; or
 - c) the child did not return on the agreed date
3. where the child is persistently late arriving at school after registers have closed
4. where a combination of more than 10 sessions of a) to c) above have been recorded.

The fine is £60 (per parent, per child) if paid within 21 days of receipt of the notice; rising to £120 if paid after 21 days but within 28 days.

For example a two parent family taking 2 children out of school for an unauthorised holiday would be liable for a total of £240 if paid within 21 days or £480 between 21 and 28 days.

The payment must be made in full – part payments will not be accepted

Lateness

When pupils arrive late, this causes a disruption to their own learning as well as the learning of other pupils.

- The school doors and gates open at 8.40am and close at 8.50am for registration. Pupils are marked late between 8.50am and 9.20am, and Code (L) is entered in the register (arrived before the register closed).
- Pupils who arrive after 8.50am must report to the office and be entered in the School Late Book – a reason for lateness will be recorded at this time.
- If a pupil arrives after 9.20am Code (U) is entered in the register (arrived after registration closed). This will be considered unauthorised absence unless a satisfactory reason is given.
- Action to address lateness will be taken. A letter will be sent to parents/carers of children who are late on a regular basis.

Illness

- Parents/carers are asked to contact the school on the first day of the absence to provide a reason for the absence preferably before 8.30am indicating the type of illness.
- Where office staff are not made aware of the reason for a child's absence they will, wherever possible, contact parents/carers by telephone on the first day of absence. If no contact is



made and no explanation for absence is given, a letter of explanation will be required by the parent / carer on the child's return to school.

- If any member of staff is concerned about a reason for absence, the head teacher should be informed.

Medical or dental appointments

- Parents and carers are encouraged to make all medical appointments, where possible, out of school hours.
- Absence from school due to a medical appointment will be considered as an authorised absence. Parents/carers are requested to inform the school office in advance of the appointment, in writing if possible.

Reporting to Parents and Carers

All absences both authorised and unauthorised and lateness will be reported to the parents/carers at the end of the academic year within their child's report.

Monitoring Attendance

Pupils' absence and late arrival at school is monitored regularly by the Head teacher, the school Governors and the Local Authority.

If a child's attendance has been identified as being a cause for concern, the Headteacher will send a letter to the parents/carers detailing these concerns.

The Headteacher will continue to review the child's attendance and if their attendance has not improved, parents/carers will be asked to attend a School Attendance Meeting with the Head Teacher and the Education Welfare Officer. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss support strategies which can be implemented to improve the attendance of the individual pupil. An action plan will be written to record agreed actions to improve the child's attendance.

As part of this process, it may be decided that the Headteacher will require additional evidence to support further sickness absence authorisation e.g. medical appointment cards or sight of a prescription etc. The Headteacher may also request permission from parents/carers to write to their child's GP in order to ascertain if the current pattern of absence is one that could be expected in relation to the health concerns of the child.

If, following the meeting, attendance does not improve, the Head Teacher with the support of the Education Welfare Officer may call the parents/carers to attend an Attendance Panel meeting in line with the South Gloucestershire school attendance procedures, which can be found at <https://www.southglos.gov.uk/documents/1-Flow-chart-Formal-Attendance-Process-April-16.pdf>

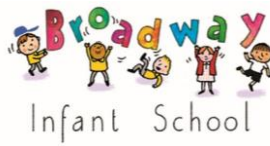


Promoting attendance and targets

- The school's attendance target is for every pupil to achieve at least 97%.
- Parents/carers will be regularly reminded (via newsletters) of the importance of good attendance.
- Appendix A lists people who have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality.
- Class attendance percentages are shared on the school newsletter on a weekly basis.

Children Missing Education

If a family moves away from the area or wishes to transfer their child to another school, the Head teacher must be informed in writing. As a safeguarding measure a child cannot be removed from a school roll until the school has been notified by another school that a place has been offered and accepted. When children stop attending and cannot be traced, the school will follow Local Authority guidance and report them to the Local Authority Children Missing Education Officer.



Appendix A

Roles and Responsibilities

The following people have key responsibilities in the pursuit of high levels of attendance and punctuality:

Governors

- To set and monitor progress towards annual targets for attendance.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the Attendance Policy.

Head Teacher

- To ensure that effective systems are in place to accurately reflect individual pupil and group and whole school attendance patterns.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the office staff or teachers as to whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.
- To monitor individual pupil, group and whole school attendance and punctuality.
- To work in partnership with key agencies if attendance and/or punctuality is an issue.
- To provide governors with information to enable them to evaluate the success of policy and practice.
- To write to parents/carers regarding any concerns about their child's attendance.
- To arrange meetings with parents/carers to discuss support and set targets for those experiencing attendance difficulties.
- To coordinate with the Educational Welfare Office regarding providing work/education for children who are absent for sustained periods of time.

Class Teacher

- To provide an accurate record of the attendance of each child in their class.
- To record the reasons for absence given to them on Arbor or the appropriate recording sheet.
- To organise work to be sent home for children in their class who are expected to be absent for an extended period through sickness.

School Administrator

- To prepare, manage and co-ordinate the use of the ARBOR Attendance Manager System.
- To monitor and track attendance patterns, in conjunction with the Head teacher, for all children and prepare relevant attendance reports when necessary.
- To contact parents/carers on the first day of their child's absence to establish the reason.
- To ensure that a satisfactory reason for every absence has been established for each child.
- To make a judgement in conjunction with the Head teacher whether an absence is authorised or unauthorised.

Education Welfare Officer

- To enforce the law regarding school attendance.
- To support the whole school response to attendance through regular meetings and monitoring individual children's attendance.



Administration

- The school uses Attendance Manager provided by ARBOR to store and monitor its legal responsibilities in relationship to attendance.
- Registers are a vital legal document and teachers are required by their contractual duties to take an attendance register at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions.
- Registers must be completed carefully and accurately, as they provide a record of a pupil's attendance. Failure to complete a register accurately leaves the school vulnerable to complaint from parents or carers and constitutes a risk if an emergency evacuation has to take place.



Appendix B

Absence During Term Time Request Form

The law says that parents/carers do not have a legal right to take their children out of school for holidays in term time. Schools can only give permission to parents/carers to take their child out of school providing there are **exceptional** circumstances for the request and an application is made to the school in advance by the parent/carer who is taking the child out of school.

When deciding whether to grant the request the school will consider:

- If there are **exceptional** circumstances for the request.
- The time of year of the holiday.
- How long the holiday will be and how much it will disrupt the child's education.
- Previous similar requests.
- The child's attendance record.

If the school refuses to authorise the absence and you still take your child out of school, it will be classed as an unauthorised absence. The school may also request the Local Authority to issue a Penalty Notice fine.

Permission is requested for the absence of:

Child's name:	Class:
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From:	To:	Total school days requested=
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Reason for absence:

Please give full details of the **exceptional circumstances** why you require this absence during term time.

Please use additional paper if required.

Signature of parent or carer.....

Date.....

For completion by office:

Previous attendance record is: Good / Satisfactory / Poor Percentage attendance%
 (100-96%) (95-93%) (<93%)

Previous exceptional circumstances requests:days

Broken weeks this academic year:%

HEADTEACHER'S DECISION:

Permission for the above exceptional circumstances absence is : **Granted / Refused**

The decision will be communicated to parents via text / email. Date of text/email sent:.....

SIGNED..... DATE.....



APPENDIX C Good attendance: the benefits and consequences of missing a few days over the school year?

Attendance	Number of school days missed (by the end of the academic year)	
100%	Zero days off	Excellent! A child can take advantage of all learning opportunities.
98% +	Less than a week	Very good – This will help all aspects of their progress and life in school. A child should reach his/her full potential, leading to the best possible start to their formal education.
97-98%	5 days – a school week	
96-97%	6 days	Good attendance – A child has a good start to their schooling and can make the most of all opportunities to do their best.
95.2-96%	8 days	Satisfactory just above the average – A child is likely to achieve their targets, however, they should strive to build on this.
93-95%	10 days – two school weeks	Below the average attendance nationally - If a child has more than two weeks away from school they may fail to make the progress expected.
91-93%	15 days – three school weeks	Poor attendance – absence is now affecting attainment and progress at school. Parents will need to work with the school to improve the situation.
Below 90%	20 days – four school weeks	Unacceptable – A child will now be finding it extremely difficult to keep up and achieve their best. Below 90% attendance is considered persistent absenteeism and the Local Authority may become involved to take action. Where this is due to a genuine medical reason an Individual Health Care Plan will be considered.
Below 80%		Children with this attendance are missing a day for every week in school . Absence is causing SERIOUS CONCERN . It is seriously affecting attainment and progress and is disrupting the child's learning. Where the absences are unauthorised, the school will be supported by the Local Authority to take action against the parents/carers.