

## Attendance Policy



June 2021

### Introduction

Pupils need to attend school regularly to benefit from their education. Missing out on lessons leaves children vulnerable to falling behind. Brockwell Junior School seeks to ensure that all pupils receive a full-time education which maximises opportunities for each pupil to realise his/her true potential.

The school acknowledges the efforts of pupils to improve their attendance and timekeeping and challenges the behaviour of those pupils and parents who give low priority to attendance and punctuality.

- School will implement an engaging curriculum and provide a values focused ethos to ensure children enjoy coming to school.
- Parents have a legal duty to make sure your child gets a full-time education.
- Parents will be contacted by school staff if your child doesn't turn up (even if they're only absent for a day).
- You can be prosecuted if you don't give your child an education. You'll normally get warnings and offers of help from the school's pastoral team, Early help or Derbyshire County Council first.
- If a child is absent from school and school has concerns about the welfare of the child, a referral to Starting Point will be made.

### When your child can miss school

You can only allow your child to miss school if either:

- they're too ill to go in
- you've got advance permission from the school

There's extra support available if your child can't go to school for long periods because of a health problem.

### Aims

At Brockwell Junior School we aim to:

#### **1. Maintain or improve the overall percentage of pupils' regular school attendance.**

This means:

- a) applying this Attendance Policy consistently.
- b) establishing and maintaining a high profile for attendance and punctuality.
- c) relating attendance issues directly to the school's values, ethos and curriculum.
- d) monitoring progress in attendance on a termly basis.
- e) discouraging holiday absence by making parents clear about their legal rights regarding holiday absence.
- f) stressing to pupils and parents that high rates of attendance lead to successful learning.
- g) improving the rates of children arriving on time for the start of the school day.

h) reach our target of 96% attendance

**2. Make attendance and punctuality a priority for all those associated with the school including pupils, parents, teachers and governors.**

This means:

- a) producing termly/annual reports to parents/governors.
- b) discussing attendance at induction meetings for new parents/pupils.
- c) making clear the times for the beginning of each session, school term dates and training days.
- d) making clear the procedure for parents with regard to lateness or absence.
- e) providing INSET training for appointed staff with regard to attendance.
- f) discussing attendance issues in EWO (Education Welfare) evaluation meetings and/or in relevant staff meetings (eg attendance review meetings).
- g) using award systems; certificates, to reward excellent levels of attendance.

**3. Develop a framework which defines agreed roles and responsibilities and promotes consistency in carrying out designated tasks.**

This means:

- a) maintaining unambiguous procedures for statutory registration.
- b) making phone contact, using designated school staff, on first day of absence.
- c) ensuring clearly defined late registration procedures.
- d) responding swiftly to lateness (in respect of both pupils and parents).
- e) defining clearly the roles and responsibilities with regard to attendance procedures, within the school staffing structure.
- f) having clear procedures prior to referral to EWO Service.
- g) reviewing attendance regularly.
- h) being familiar with the EWO's referral and recording system.

**4. Provide support, advice and guidance to parents and pupils.**

This means:

- a) highlighting attendance in:
  - PSHCE
  - Assemblies
  - Parents' meetings (including pre-school meetings)
- b) setting aside area/time for parents to speak to staff.
- c) seeking improved communication with parents eg when parents ring in.
- d) providing accurate and up-to-date contact information for parents.
- e) providing accurate references and information for parents at the end of terms where a child's attendance has fallen below 90%.
- f) considering later registration times on days of bad weather or where transport issues arise encouraging parents to get children into school as soon as possible.

- g) Referring you to our Early Help Team to support you in ensuring regular attendance or liaising with wider agencies e.g. CAHMS

**5. Developing a systematic approach to gathering and analysing attendance related data.**

This means:

- a) using consistent attendance codes following LA guidance.
- b) being consistent in the collection and provision of information.
- c) deciding what information, if any, is provided for:
  - governors
  - pastoral staff
  - other school staff
  - parents
  - pupils (individual or groups)
  - Early Help service
- d) monitoring and identifying developing patterns of irregular attendance and lateness.

**6. Further developing positive and consistent communication between home and school and ensure the Safeguarding of children.**

This means:

- a) initiating first day absence contact.
- b) making full use of computer generated letters.
- c) promoting expectation of absence letters/phone calls from parents.
- d) exploring the wide range of opportunities for parental partnerships (see Aim 2).
- e) providing information in a user-friendly way (may include languages other than English, and non-written).
- f) encouraging all parents into school.

**7. Implementing a system of rewards for good attending children.**

This means:

- a) actively promoting attendance and associated reward
- b) involving pupils in the evaluation of good attendance.
- c) Presenting, weekly in assembly, the 'Brockwell Attendance Trophy' to the class with the highest weekly attendance. (Under review post pandemic)
- d) taking action in accordance with objectives agreed between school and
- e) others, eg. Early Help, parents, CAHMS, Behaviour Support Service.

**8. Promoting effective partnerships with the Education Welfare Officers and with other services and agencies.**

This means:

- a) the Head Teacher maintaining liaison with EWO and other agencies.
- b) ensuring that the admission register and attendance registers are available for inspection during school hours by the EWO.
- c) giving priority to timetabled meetings with the EWO Service.
- d) carrying out initial enquiries/intervention prior to referral.
- e) gathering and recording relevant information to assist completion of the EWO's work.

- f) holding termly attendance reviews with key school staff and the EWO.
- g) arranging multi-agency liaison meetings as appropriate.
- h) establishing and maintaining a list of named contacts within the local community.
- i) encouraging active involvement of other services and agencies in the life of the school eg. Early Help, Parent Partnership, Counselling Services.

**9. Recognising the needs of the individual pupil when planning reintegration following significant periods of absence.**

This means:

- a) being sensitive to the individual needs and circumstances of returning pupils.
- b) involving/informing all staff in any reintegration process.
- c) providing opportunities for counselling and feedback.
- d) considering peer support and mentoring.
- e) involving parents as far as possible.
- f) agreeing a timescale for the review of reintegration plan.
- g) including Early Help, parents and pupil in reintegration plans.

**National and LA Documentation**

Our policy is in line with National and LA expectations.

**Planning**

We monitor attendance on a half termly basis. Parents of pupils with attendance below 90% are informed with a note and a copy of their child's individual herringbone attendance record.

In addition a weekly 'Attendance Trophy' is given out every Friday in assembly to the class with the best attendance in the previous week. Ten minutes extra playtime is given to the winning class. (Post pandemic to be reviewed)

**Organisation**

Teachers mark the registers at 9am and 1pm. They mark them in accordance with the Derbyshire attendance codes on RM.

Authorised absence is granted under the following circumstances:

- Exclusion.
- Authorised term time leave – see below
- Days of religious observance.
- Medical/dental appointments.
- Illness – with written parental consent (this does not automatically condone absence, only the Head Teacher can do that) or medical note.
- Prevention from attending by an unavoidable cause eg exceptionally bad weather coupled with the inability to arrive in school safely eg wheelchair users
- Attending a family funeral

The following need to be counted as 'present'

- Education off-site visits.

- Education visits eg another setting.
- Approved sporting / drama activities.

### Requesting a leave of absence

From 1 September 2013, new regulations came in to force which make clear that headteachers MAY NOT grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are “exceptional circumstances”.

Term times are for education. This is the priority. Children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. If an event can reasonably be scheduled outside of term time then it would not be normal to authorise absence.

Absence during term time for holidays/vacations is therefore not considered an exceptional circumstance.

The Headteacher will determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted. Each case will be looked at on its individual merits and in Brockwell Juniors will often be at the discretion of a panel that includes one governor.

Circumstances that may not be considered exceptional are:

- Availability of cheap holidays and cheap travel arrangements.
- Days overlapping with the beginning or end of term.
- Birthday of pupil or family member.

Parents requesting leave of absence for **exceptional circumstances** must make the request in writing at least **two weeks** before the anticipated start date. The headteacher will respond with the decision as soon as is practicable.

If leave of absence is granted for the purpose of a family holiday registration code H should be used.

If leave of absence for the purpose of a family holiday is not granted and then taken, registration code G should be used which could result in a penalty notice being issued (see advice for parents and carers document available from school or DCC website).

Other leave of absence that is granted should be recorded as C in the attendance register. Leave not granted, but taken, should be recorded O.

### Lateness –

The code for lateness is entered when a child has arrived in school after the register has closed at 9:05am. A child arriving after 9.30am will be coded as ‘unauthorised late’.

### Medical appointments –

A child who is out of school, when register is called, for a medical/dental appointment, is marked absent (M). We try to encourage parents to bring their children to school before appointments whenever possible before going to appointments.

### Attendance Panels

Attendance Support panels are set up if the attendance of a child is causing concern.

- Parents are invited to attend the Panel.
- The Family Resource Worker or member of the Multi Agency Team is invited to the Panel if appropriate.
- A Senior Leader will attend the panel.
- During the panel, reasons for poor attendance will be established.
- Once actions are agreed, a summary letter will be sent home with the outcome of the meeting including a target for the following 4 week period.
- A date will be agreed for a review of attendance.
- It is anticipated that, unless there is a sound reason for absence, attendance will improve with support. If attendance does not improve without sound reason, school must refer the matter to Derbyshire County Council.

### **The Role of the Head Teacher**

The Head Teacher will:

- receive data from the clerk on a weekly basis showing whole class attendance. This is used to present 'The Brockwell Attendance Trophy' every Friday.
- receive class lists of attendance data at the start of every half term detailing individual attendance rates from the start of the school year.
- The Head Teacher then sends out copies of individual herringbones and a note of explanation to all those with attendance below 90%.

The following monitoring procedure is followed:

- In November this highlights a few children to monitor
- In January a clearer list of children to monitor becomes apparent – these are children with 3 bouts of illness or more and attendance rates at 90% and below
- In March, if the same pupils above haven't improved, parents are informed by the Head Teacher, that their child's attendance is causing concern. The Education Welfare Officer (EWO) is called in to support families whose attendance has dropped below 90%
- In April, those with attendance below 90% and more than 5 bouts of illness are referred to the EWO
- In June, all those with attendance below 90% are referred to the EWO.
- If at least one of the following criteria are met then a referral will be made to the EWO;
  - There are two consecutive weeks of unauthorised absence.
  - Five sessions of unauthorised absence in a five week period
  - Ten sessions of authorised absence spread within a five week period where no medical evidence has been supplied.

### **The Role of the Class Teacher**

The teacher is responsible for an accurate record of attendance being taken. (Support Staff/Teaching Assistants may be required to complete the register on behalf of the class teachers.)

The register is taken at the start of each session, 9am and 1pm.

Attendance is recorded using the attendance register. The appropriate symbols must be used (see appendix) as agreed.

Persistent lateness is reported to the Head Teacher as should any degree or

pattern of absence creating a concern to the class teacher.

### **The Role of Office/Admin Staff**

- To monitor registers on a daily basis.
- Check absence notes and change any unauthorised absence codes if a message has been received in the office.
- If no message has been received by 9:30am, office staff ring or text child's contact numbers and find reason for absence.
- Prepare class attendance summaries on a weekly basis, so that the head can present the trophy in Friday's assembly.
- During the first week back after every holiday, prepare class lists recording individual attendance rates enabling the Head Teacher's monitoring process.

### **The Role of the Parent/Guardian**

Parents are asked to seek early advice from staff at school or the Education Welfare Service if their child is beginning to experience difficulty in attending school. Help at an early stage is usually most effective.

- It is the statutory duty of every parent/guardian to ensure that their child attends school regularly and on time. (Section 444(1) Education Act 1996)
- Parents must contact the school on the first day of absence notifying the school the reason why the child will not be attending.
- Where a message confirming absence has not been received, parents may be required to send into school a written note explaining the reason for each absence. (A blanket reason for a series of absences is not accepted.)
- Regarding Holiday absence – A holiday absence form must be completed prior to the absence taking place. The parent must make the case for the period of absence eg booking holidays because it is cheaper in term time is not an acceptable reason for holiday absence.

### **Children Missing From Education**

School follows the current Department for Education guidance regarding procedures schools must follow when children move schools. School must inform the Local Authority of any child that we believe has left and not provided forwarding information. If we are unable to establish a child's new school, we would have to refer them as a missing child to the Children Missing from Education Officer. At a point when parents / carers have decided to change school you are asked by the school office to complete a pupil exit form.

### **Success Criteria**

The success of this policy will be judged by the % attendance at school and the number of holiday request forms used for absences.

## **APPENDIX – see School Attendance Guidance July 2019(Covid codes also used from 2020)**

Attendance codes for when pupils are present at approved off-site educational activity are as follows:

**Code B: Off-site educational activity** This code should be used when pupils are present at an off-site educational activity that has been approved by the school. Ultimately schools are responsible for the safeguarding and welfare of pupils educated off-site. Therefore by using code B, schools are certifying that the education is supervised and measures have been taken to safeguard pupils. This code should not be used for any unsupervised educational activity or where a pupil is at home doing school work. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the provider of the alternative activity notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. The school should record the pupil's absence using the relevant absence code.

**Code D: Dual Registered - at another educational establishment** This code is not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census. The law allows for dual registration of pupils at more than one school. This code is used to indicate that the pupil was not expected to attend the session in question because they were scheduled to attend the other school at which they are registered. The main examples of dual registration are pupils who are attending a pupil referral unit, a hospital school or a special school on a temporary basis. It can also be used when the pupil is known to be registered at another school during the session in question. Each school should only record the pupil's attendance and absence for those sessions that the pupil is scheduled to attend their school. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby all unexplained and unexpected absence is followed up in a timely manner.

**Code J: At an interview with prospective employers, or another educational establishment** This code should be used to record time spent in interviews with prospective employers or another educational establishment. Schools should be satisfied that the interview is linked to employment prospects, further education or transfer to another educational establishment.

**Code P: Participating in a supervised sporting activity** This code should be used to record the sessions when a pupil is taking part in a sporting activity that has been approved by the school and supervised by someone authorised by the school.

**Code V: Educational visit or trip** This code should be used for attendance at an organised trip or visit, including residential trips organised by the school, or attendance at a supervised trip of a strictly educational nature arranged by an organisation approved by the school.

**Code W: Work experience**

Work experience is for pupils in the final two years of compulsory education. Schools should ensure that they have in place arrangements whereby the work experience placement provider notifies the school of any absences by individual pupils. Any absence should be recorded using the relevant code. 11 Authorised Absence from School Authorised absence' means that the school has either given



approval in advance for a pupil of compulsory school age to be away, or has accepted an explanation offered afterwards as justification for absence.

Absence codes when pupils are not present in school are as follows: Code C: Leave of absence authorised by the school Only exceptional circumstances warrant an authorised leave of absence. Schools should consider each application individually taking into account the specific facts and circumstances and relevant background context behind the request.

Code E: Excluded but no alternative provision made If no alternative provision is made for a pupil to continue their education whilst they are excluded but still on the admission register, they should be marked absent in the attendance register using Code E. Alternative provision must be arranged for each excluded pupil from the sixth consecutive day of any fixed period or permanent exclusion. Where alternative provision is made they should be marked using the appropriate attendance code.

Code H: Holiday authorised by the school Head teachers should not grant leave of absence unless there are exceptional circumstances. The application must be made in advance and the head teacher must be satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances based on the individual facts and circumstances of the case which warrant the leave. Where a leave of absence is granted, the head teacher will determine the number of days a pupil can be away from school. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the head teacher's discretion.

Code I: Illness (not medical or dental appointments) Schools should advise parents to notify them on the first day the child is unable to attend due to illness. Schools should authorise absences due to illness unless they have genuine cause for concern about the veracity of an illness. If the authenticity of illness is in doubt, schools can request parents to provide medical evidence to support illness. Schools can record the absence as unauthorised if not satisfied of the authenticity of the illness but should advise parents of their intention. Schools are advised not to request medical evidence unnecessarily. Medical evidence can take the form of prescriptions, appointment cards, etc. rather than doctors' notes.

M: Medical or dental appointments Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence. Schools should, however, encourage parents to make appointments out of 12 school hours. Where this is not possible, the pupil should only be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary for the appointment.

Code R: Religious observance Schools must treat absence as authorised when it is due to religious observance. The day must be exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong. Where necessary, schools should seek advice from the parents' religious body about whether it has set the day apart for religious observance.

Code S: Study leave Schools must record study leave as authorised absence. Study leave should be used sparingly and only granted to Year 11 pupils during public examinations. Provision should still be made available for those pupils who want to continue to come into school to revise.

Code T: Gypsy, Roma and Traveller absence A number of different groups are covered by the generic term Traveller – Roma, English and Welsh Gypsies, Irish and Scottish Travellers, Showmen (fairground people) and Circus people, Bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and New Travellers. This code should be used when Traveller families are known to be travelling for occupational purposes and have agreed this with the school but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision. It should not be used for any other types of absence by these groups. To help ensure continuity of education for Traveller children it is expected that the child should attend school elsewhere when their family is travelling and be dual registered at that school and the main school. Children from these groups whose families do not travel are expected to register at a school and attend as normal. They are subject to the same rules as other children in terms of the requirement to attend school regularly once registered at a school.

#### Unauthorised Absence from School

Unauthorised absence is where a school is not satisfied with the reasons given for the absence. Absence codes are as follows:

Code G: Holiday not authorised by the school or in excess of the period determined by the head teacher. If a school does not authorise a leave of absence for the purpose of a holiday but the parents still take the child out of school, or the child is kept away for longer than was agreed, the absence is unauthorised. The regulations do not allow schools to give retrospective approval. If the parents did not apply for leave of absence in advance, the absence must be recorded as unauthorised.

Code N: Reason for absence not yet provided Schools should follow up all unexplained and unexpected absences in a timely manner. Every effort should be made to establish the reason for a pupil's absence. When the reason for the pupil's absence has been established the register should be amended. This code should not be left on a pupil's attendance record indefinitely; if no reason for absence is provided after a reasonable amount of time it should be replaced with code O (absent from school without authorisation).

Code O: Absent from school without authorisation If the school is not satisfied with the reason given for absence they should record it as unauthorised. Code U: Arrived in school after registration closed Schools should actively discourage late arrival, be alert to patterns of late arrival and seek an explanation from the parent.

#### Administrative Codes

The following codes are not counted as a possible attendance in the School Census:

Code X: Not required to be in school This code is used to record sessions that non-compulsory school age children are not expected to attend.

Code Y: Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

This code can be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:

- The school site, or part of it, is closed due to an unavoidable cause; or
- The transport provided by the school or a local authority is not available and where the pupil's home is not within walking distance; or

- A local or national emergency has resulted in widespread disruption to travel which has prevented the pupil from attending school. This code can also be used where a pupil is unable to attend because:
- The pupil is in custody; detained for a period of less than four months. If the school has evidence from the place of custody that the pupil is attending educational activities then they can record those sessions as code B (present at approved educational activity). This code is collected in the School Census for statistical purposes.

Code Z: Pupil not on admission register This code is available to enable schools to set up registers in advance of pupils joining the school to ease administration burdens. Schools must put pupils on the admission register from the first day that the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend the school.  
Code #:

Planned whole or partial school closure This code should be used for whole or partial school closures that are known or planned in advance such as: between terms; half terms; occasional days (for example, bank holidays); weekends (where it is required by the management information system); up to five non-educational days to be used for curriculum planning/training; and use of schools as polling stations.

Different Term Dates for Different Pupils Schools and local authorities can agree to set different term dates for different year groups – e.g. for 'staggered starts' or 'induction days'. Code # can be used to record the year group(s) that is not due to attend. This is only acceptable where the school ensures that those pupils not attending on that day are still offered a full education over the school year.

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## Pupil Exit Form

<b>Your child(ren)'s name(s)</b>	
When are you moving?	
Last date your child(ren) will attend the school	
Your new address	
<b>If moving within UK:</b>	
Are child(ren) in the Admissions process in the new LA, if yes, give details of a) LA b) schools applied for	a) b)
Name of new school (if within UK)	
<b>If moving overseas:</b>	
Name and address of possible/confirmed new school	
Contact details for new school e.g. phone no, email address, fax no.	
Flight details: a) Airline b) Date of travel c) Destination airport	a) b) c)
Person providing information:	
1. Name	
2. Mobile no.	
3. Email address	
4. Relationship to child	
Date	

Please return this form to the School Office before your child leaves. Thank you.