



Attendance Policy

Introduction

If children are to get the greatest benefit from their education at Bradley Green, it is important that they have good attendance and arrive punctually. As children grow and prepare for their next stages of education and employment they need to see good attendance and punctuality as important qualities that are expected and valued by others and employers. We will do all that we can to encourage good attendance and punctuality. Where children are not conforming to our high expectations for attendance and punctuality we will put into place effective strategies to bring about improvement.

Aim

Working in partnership with parents, all staff at Bradley Green will do all they can to ensure that children come to school happily, willingly and punctually, to ensure that all gain the greatest possible value from their education.

Objectives

- To ensure that all children attend school well.
- To ensure that all children are punctual.
- To work in partnership with parents/carers in ensuring that their children attend school well and that they arrive on time.
- To keep good records of attendance through the school registers and to take prompt action to follow up absences.
- To work effectively with the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) and other external agencies to follow up attendance issues promptly and efficiently.
- To monitor closely children with attendance and punctuality issues and to work with parents and where appropriate other agencies to bring about improvement.

Definitions

Every half day absence from school is classified as either authorised or unauthorised absence.

- An absence is classified as **authorised** when a child has been away from school for a legitimate reason, such as illness, and the school has received notification from a parent/carer. Only the school can make an absence authorised. Parents/carers do not have this authority.
- An absence is classified as **unauthorised** when a child is away from school without good reason, even with the support of a parent.

Strategies

- All staff will complete registers accurately for each session (morning and afternoon) and will draw to the attention of the Headteacher/Learning Mentor any absences that are cause for concern.
- Children arriving late will be carefully monitored and action taken as appropriate.
- Parents will be asked to telephone or notify the school office if their child is absent or ill.
- The school office will make telephone contact with a home when a child is absent if the parents have not notified the school that their child is absent.
- Where a child is developing a pattern of 'occasional' absences the parent will be contacted to discuss the pattern of absences.
- Letters will be sent to parents of children whose attendance is causing concern, in the first instance.
- The school will use welfare and attendance officers to follow up absences that continue to cause concern.
- Where necessary the school will work closely with Tameside to take action against those unlawfully keeping children from school.

Promoting good attendance

Parents, Children and staff all have a part to play in promoting good attendance. To support this Bradley Green will:-

- Give parents, children and staff details on attendance through weekly assemblies and monthly newsletters.
- Report to Parents annually on attendance and punctuality rates.
- Celebrate good attendance through weekly class rewards, termly and annual 100% attendance certificates and prizes for individual children.
- Approach individual parents where there is a cause for concern with regard to punctuality and attendance.

Bradley Green Attendance Policy 2017



- Work together with Parents to raise attendance throughout school.

Medical Appointments

We ask that wherever possible medical appointments are made outside of school hours. It is most important that you inform the school office, prior to the appointment, if your child is to be absent from school.

Long term absence

When children have an illness that means they will be away from school for over five days, the school will do all it can to send work home, so that the child can keep up with their work.

If appropriate the school will liaise with the EWO service in order to provide appropriate support.

Unauthorised absence of more than 4 weeks may result in a child being taken off the school roll.

Requests for leave of absence

Following a change in the law from 1st September 2013 (see **Appendix 1**) **headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time** unless there are exceptional circumstances. Headteachers should determine the number of school days a child can be away from school if the leave is granted.

Any absences taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract a penalty notice.

Penalty Notices

The 2007 Education (Penalty Notices) regulations set out the procedures for issuing penalty notices (fines) to each parent who fails to ensure their children's regular attendance at school.

Parents must, from 1 September 2013, pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days.

(See standard letter to parents **Appendix 1**)

Monitoring and Review

Those people with responsibility for attendance matters are:

- The Headteacher: Ms Matthews
- The Learning Mentor: Mrs Massey

It is the responsibility of the governors to monitor overall attendance, and they will request this information from the headteacher. The governing body also has the responsibility for this policy, and for seeing that it is carried out. The governors will therefore examine closely the information provided to them, and seek to ensure that our attendance figures are as high as they should be.

The school will keep accurate attendance records on file for a minimum period of three years.



APPENDIX 1

BRADLEY GREEN COMMUNITY SCHOOL
HEAD TEACHER: Ms J Matthews

Dear Parents/Carers

Date:

Please find below important information from the Local Authority that we are required to share with all parents concerning absence from school. It is for information only and is being sent out to every child at this school. It outlines the actions that could be taken against parents/carers re attendance.

Penalty Notices for Non-school Attendance

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 2004 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any 12 week period (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice fine of £60, which must be paid within 21 days. If payment is made after 21 days but within 28 days, the penalty is increased to £120. Where a fine remains unpaid after 28 days, the matter will be referred to the Borough Solicitor, who will consider instigating criminal proceedings.

In law, an offence occurs if a parent or carer fails to secure a child's regular attendance at school. Tameside Education Welfare Service, in conjunction with schools and Greater Manchester Police, will use these powers as an early deterrent to prevent patterns of unauthorised absence developing.

Following a change in the law from 1st September 2013 **headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time** unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Any absences taken without the agreement of the school, or in excess of that agreed, will be classed as unauthorised and may attract a penalty notice.

Parents may also receive a Penalty Notice without a warning letter for the offence of failing to secure regular school attendance for the following reasons:

- If their child is stopped on a truancy sweep more than once.
- If they have not co-operated with the Education Welfare Service following a referral from school after they have taken steps to address the absences with the parent/carer and pupil.
- If their child fails to return to school following a fixed term exclusion.

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 also makes it an offence if a parent fails to ensure that their child is not in a public place during the first 5 days of a fixed term or permanent exclusion. Penalty Notices may be issued in relation to this matter.

The Local Authority and schools are committed to providing the best possible future for your child. If you have concerns about your child's attendance at school or if you are experiencing any difficulties, contact your school and ask for help. Support is also available from the Education Welfare Service on telephone number 0161 342 3258.

Yours sincerely

Ms J Matthews

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