



BROADWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Attendance Policy

2019 - 2020

Statement of Intent

School attendance is subject to various Education laws and this school attendance policy is written to reflect these laws and the guidance produced by the Department for Education.

At Broadway Junior, we believe that good attendance and punctuality are important in helping pupils achieve the best that they can be. Pupils should be at school on time, dressed in accordance with the school uniform policy, ready to learn, every day that it is open, unless they have a reason for absence that is unavoidable.

Promoting and achieving excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community, parents, carers, staff, governors and the pupils themselves.

Statutory Framework

Under Section 444 of the 1996 Education Act pupil's are required to attend regularly at school and should they fail to attend at least the expected level (97%) regularly legal action may be taken regarding this. Parents/Carers may receive a Fixed Penalty Notice, be fined up to £2,500 or face three months in prison and receive a parenting order should their child's attendance level be at an unacceptable level. An Education Supervision Order could also be sought.

- School is required to complete a register, twice during the school day, at the start of the school day, 8:40 am, and again for the afternoon session at 1:00/1:10pm.
- School is obliged by law to differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence. A letter or telephone message from a parent does not itself authorise an absence. It is for the school to determine if an absence is to be authorised (The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006).

Education Law defines a *parent* as:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not;
- Any person who has parental responsibility for a child or young person; and,
- Any person who has care of a child or young person i.e. lives with and looks after the child on a daily basis.

It is important to note that even though a parent may not live in the same home as the pupil, they are still responsible for ensuring the child attends school every day.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Promoting positive behaviour and excellent attendance is the responsibility of the whole school community including students, parents, carers, governors and staff.

School will:

- promote good attendance and aim to reduce absence (including persistent absence) ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled and differentiate between authorised and unauthorised absence in order to act early to address patterns of absence.
- keep parents, carers fully informed of their child's attendance/punctuality record and follow up unexplained absences by text, phone calls and letters as appropriate
- contact parents, carers on the first day when a child fails to attend school without providing good reason, via telephone or text message
- take timely action on any problem notified to us and involve appropriate outside agencies in order to support pupils and their families. This may include a 'home visit' or a request to the police to undertake a 'Safe and Well' welfare visit.

Pupils will:

- Aim to achieve 100% attendance each academic year
- Attend school daily.
- Arrive on time and be appropriately prepared for the day.

- Tell a member of staff about any problem or reason that may prevent them from attending school.
- Go to registration and lessons on time.
- Will take responsibility for registering on arrival at the school office if they are late or are leaving the school site during school hours.

Parents will:

- Support the school and their child in aiming for 100% attendance each academic year
- Ensure their child attends school daily and on time (i.e. by 8:40 am each morning)
- Ensure that their child attends school regularly, punctually, dressed in accordance with the school uniform policy, fully equipped, with a positive attitude to learning
- Notify the school before 8:40 am of any absence.
- Avoid taking their child out of school for non-urgent medical or dental appointments
- Only request leave of absence if it is for an exceptional circumstance.
- Ensure the school has updated contact numbers for designated adults
- Actively work with the school's and relevant multi-agency staff, to solve any attendance issues as and when they occur.

Appendix 1 Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance

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Regular, efficient and accurate recording of attendance.

Under the 2006 Education Regulations **it is a legal requirement that a register is taken at the start of the day**. Not only does the process allow us to monitor attendance but also to act as a pupil checklist in respect of health and safety and safeguarding issues – e.g. Fire Drill the school

School starts at 8:40am when all pupils should be in their classes in preparation for the register being taken at 8:45am. The afternoon register is taken at between 1:00pm and 1:10pm. It is essential that all students are registered on both occasions.

Any pupil who is on roll but not present in the school must be recorded within one of these categories.

1. Unauthorised absence

This is for those pupils where no reason has been provided, or whose absence is deemed to be without valid reason.

2. Authorised absence

This is for those pupils who are away from school for a reason that is deemed to be valid under the Education Act 1996.

3. Approved Educational Activity - Pupils recorded in this category are deemed to be present for attendance returns purposes.

This covers types of supervised educational activity undertaken off site but with the approval of the school.

This would include:

- Field trips and educational visits
- Sporting activities

PROCEDURES

Under the 1996 Education Act parents commit an offence if their child does not attend school regularly¹. If your child cannot come to school because of illness however; you should advise the office on the first day of absence by telephone. If no message is received we will make every effort to contact you either by phone or text before 10:00am.

It is therefore essential that the school is kept informed of changes of contact details such as up to date phone numbers and addresses. In cases where we continue to be concerned about a child's absence we may make a 'home visit' or request the police to undertake a 'Safe and Well' welfare call. Parents are also encouraged to ensure that their child brings written confirmation of the reasons for their absence, when they return to school.

School will only authorise a medical absence if the circumstances are unavoidable. If a parent rings the school to inform them that a child is unwell, they may be asked to provide supporting evidence such as a medical appointment card, letter from a professional, doctor's note, medication prescribed by a doctor, copy of prescription, print screen of medical notes, as well as letters concerning hospital appointments or any other relevant evidence.

School may choose not to authorise absence without this supporting evidence as it is for the school to determine if an absence is to be authorised (Regulation 7 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.)

Parents are asked to make routine medical and dental appointments outside school hours wherever possible. Where such appointments in school time are unavoidable, parents should inform the school in advance and provide a copy of the appointment card. The absence will be marked unauthorised if the parent fails to submit the appointment card.

¹ The meaning of regular attendance has been defined by the Supreme court as meaning in accordance with the rules prescribed by the school

School will closely monitor your child's attendance and alert you if we feel there is an issue. We undertake a range of measures to support pupils where attendance is an issue. Where we fail to see an improvement in a pupil's attendance it may be necessary to make a referral to an appropriate external agency to ensure the pupil receives the support required and it is important that parents/carers work with them in order to improve their child's attendance.

If your child is experiencing difficulties regarding attendance you should contact the school at an early stage and we will endeavour to work with you to resolve the difficulties.

Should difficulties regarding attendance not be resolved in this way, the school will make a referral to the Local Authority Attendance Service who will assess the case to determine the appropriateness of use of statutory enforcement procedures i.e. Fixed Penalty Notices, Magistrates Court or seek an Education Supervision Order on the child. The maximum penalty on conviction is a fine of £2500 and/or 3 months imprisonment a parenting order can also be imposed.

Punctuality/Lateness

Pupils who arrive after registration **must** sign in accordance with the school procedures at the main office.

Arrival after the close of registration with no valid reason will be marked as unauthorised absence and coded "U" in the register. Parents/carers of pupils who have patterns of lateness will be contacted to discuss the importance of good time keeping and punctuality and how this might be achieved. If lateness persists parents/carers, will be invited to attend a meeting in school and discuss the matter. If the lateness continues a referral will be made to the Local Authority Attendance Service and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued or ultimately the parent/carer could be prosecuted.

It is important to note that any pupil who arrives to school after 8:50am will be marked with a letter 'U' in the register. This means that, despite being in school, they will technically be marked absent from school for the morning sessions. It will be recorded on the register as an unauthorised absence and could result in the issuing of Fixed Penalty Notice.

Holidays in term time

The 2013 amendment to the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 makes clear that the Headteacher may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances. Time off school for family holidays cannot be authorised. The Headteacher has the discretion; in exceptional circumstances to authorise short periods off school.

Applications for Leave of Absence where dates can be known ahead must be made at least six weeks in advance of the requested date.

Consideration is given to each request before a decision is reached by the Headteacher; on behalf of the Governing Body (Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006). Each case will be judged on its individual circumstances.

Any leave of absence that has been declined or the parents have not sought approval for, will be recorded as unauthorised. These cases will be referred to the Local Authority and a Fixed Penalty Notice could be issued to each parent/carer for each student.