



Brompton-Westbrook Primary School

The Westbrook Trust

Head Teacher: Mrs S. Mason

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@BWPrimary

POLICY DOCUMENT: ATTENDANCE & LATENESS

Rationale

This policy was written using the guidance set out in a number of documents, including the following:

- School Attendance Departmental advice for maintained schools, academies, independent schools and local authorities 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016
- Children Missing Education 2016

The policy is updated every 2 years and in conjunction with the school's Attendance Advisory Practitioner (AAP) so that it reflects good practice. In parts, it contains summarised information from the documents noted above where more detailed information can be found.

Parents have a legal duty to ensure that their child attends school and arrives on time. Regular attendance is essential to the all-round development of the child and they should be allowed to take full advantage of educational opportunities available to them by law. Irregular attendance undermines their education and sometimes puts pupils at risk or encourages anti-social behaviour. Reasons for lateness and non-attendance may be complex and seem at first to be outside the control of the school but school must actively pursue the goal of regular attendance by all.

Aims

- Keep children safe
- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled including for excluded pupils and those who have to work at home temporarily
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons.

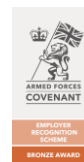
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Objectives

- Promote good attendance and reduce absence, including persistent absence
- Ensure every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
- Act early to address patterns of absence
- Parents to perform their legal duty by ensuring their children of compulsory school age who are registered at school attend regularly
- All pupils to be punctual to their lessons
- Comply with the law
- Ensure that every absence without reason and every lateness is investigated
- Follow up on unexplained absences to keep children safe
- Ensure clear and effective communication of policy and procedures with well-defined staff roles
- Make effective use of the Attendance Advisory Service for Schools and Academies

Promoting Good Attendance

The school will:

- Distribute from the AAP, LA and DfE, any information leaflets for parents made available
- Distribute policy information and other information at least once a year or on admission
- Comply with the guidance in Children Missing Education 2016
- Keep parents informed of regulations and any changes to them through the school newsletter
- Deploy community support workers e.g. FLO to work with families and children who have poor attendance
- Monitor and follow up **all** absences and lateness to ensure reasons are given
- Contact parents by 09:30 if their child does not arrive at school
- As agreed with the AAP, invite him/her to speak to children and carry out staff training
- Hold monthly meetings between the head teacher, administrator, AAP, and FLO / CLO
- Report attendance figures to the LA, governors and parents
- Make effective use of a FLO and CLO (Sure Start) for children of non-statutory school age to instill good habits from the outset

Meetings between AAP and School

September:	Identify pupils causing concern, agree action, FLO to make home visits
October:	Identify pupils causing concern, agree action, FLO to make home visits and hold clinic appointments or Attendance Panels, issue FPN, make referrals to AAP, open a CAF, refer to social care, issue warning notices, action court proceedings
November- June:	As for September / October
July	Policy and practice review

Registers

The admission register must contain the personal details of every pupil in the school, along with the date of admission or re-admission to the school, information regarding parents and carers and details

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of the school last attended. Schools must enter pupils on the admission register and attendance register from the beginning of the first day on which the school has agreed, or been notified, that the pupil will attend. If a pupil fails to attend on the agreed or notified date, the school must establish the reason for the absence and mark the attendance register accordingly. A pupil can lawfully be deleted from the admission register on the grounds prescribed in regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006.

Every amendment to the admission or attendance register must include the original entry, the amended entry, the reason for the amendment, the date on which the amendment was made and the name and position of the person who made the amendment. Every entry in the admission or attendance register must be preserved for a period of three years after the date on which the entry was made.

Schools must take the attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and again after lunch. The register must record whether every pupil is present, attending an approved educational activity, absent or unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances. The school will follow up any absences to ascertain the reason, ensure the proper safeguarding action is taken, identify whether the absence is approved or not and identify the correct code to use before entering it on to the register.

At this school, registers are computerised. There is a list of attendance and absence codes used by the administrators but teachers are only required to mark pupils as present or absent. Once a late child has registered at the office any absent mark is amended to 'late'. SIMS attendance is used and this shows whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised and the category. The accumulation of unauthorised absence could result in prosecution and a child's individual attendance records may be used as court evidence.

Children at Risk of Missing Education

All schools (including academies) must inform their local authority of any pupil who is going to be deleted from the admission register where they have:

- been taken out of school by their parents and are being educated outside the school system
- ceased to attend school and no longer live within reasonable distance of the school at which they are registered
- a medical condition certified by the school medical officer that the pupil is unlikely to be in a fit state of health to attend school
- been placed in custody for a period of more than four months due to a final court order and the proprietor does not reasonably believe they will be returning to the school at the end of that period
- been permanently excluded

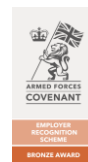
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If possible, the local authority should be notified in advance of the deletion. The school will communicate to the AAP information about any pupil who fails to attend school regularly, or has been absent without the school's permission for a continuous period of 10 days or more.

There is clear guidance on Children Missing Education 2016 to which the school will frequently refer but which is not re-stated here. Largely, the document will be used for reference and to check from time-to-time that the schools operates good practice.

Authorising Absence

Only the head teacher can authorise absence and then only for approved reasons. Where there is doubt, the head teacher, on behalf of the governing body, should take a consistent approach. Schools **'may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'**. The head teacher is **not** obliged to accept a parent's explanation. Once a pupil has been referred to the AAP for persistent low attendance, no more absences will be authorised for any reason unless official medical evidence can be produced.

Authorised absence codes will only be used after there has been some communication between the parent and school. Examples of absences that may be authorised are as follows: a special, one off event such as sibling graduation, family bereavement, or a public performance. Persistent Absence returns must be made by the attendance administrator at the end of terms 1 to 5.

The following reasons are examples of the kinds of absence that will **not** be authorised:

- Late after registration closed (9.15am)
- No reason given for absence
- Child kept off school due to parent / sibling illness
- Parent cannot get the child to school
- A birthday treat or other such circumstances
- Family work patterns
- Child refuses to attend school
- No medical evidence has been provided (if appropriate)
- Minor ailments where the child could attend school with medication (eg conjunctivitis, headache)
- Unauthorised leave of absence
- Oversleeping
- Inadequate clothing/uniform
- Confusion over school dates
- Medical/dental appointments of more than half a day without very good reasons

Holidays

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Parental requests for holiday in school time of more than 10 sessions will **not** be granted unless it is deemed that this also constitutes exceptional circumstances. Parents do not have automatic right to withdraw pupils from school. In law, parents must apply for permission for leave of absence in advance. Permission is granted in accordance with arrangements made by the governing body of the school and these are outlined clearly on the application form and in the Attendance Brochure issued to parents annually or on admission to the school. Pupils with attendance below 95% will not be granted leave. For those applying for leave in Term 1 and 2, the percentage of attendance for the previous academic year will be used. This must be above 95%. (see attendance brochure).

If a family knowingly takes a leave of absence of 5 school days (10 sessions) or more which has not been authorised by the head teacher a fixed penalty notice will be issued by Medway Council. The decision will be made by the head teacher who will consider each case on its own merit. The AAP will be consulted.

The school will consider the following when authorising the taking of leave:

- The circumstances are exceptional
- This is the only request for leave this academic year
- The request is for 5 days or less
- Notice has been given at least two weeks in advance
- Pupil attainment is at least average in reading, writing and mathematics
- Pupil attendance is at 95% or above (January to July) or was at 95% or above during the last academic year (September to December)
- Effective procedures for catching up on missed schooling have been outlined
- The dates do not fall during Induction fortnight (first 2 weeks of Autumn term)
- The dates do not fall during the revision and testing timetable (see below)

REVISION AND TESTING TIMETABLE – when holiday will NOT be granted	
Nursery (F1)	The revision and testing clause is not applicable
Reception (F2)	The revision and testing clause is not applicable
Year 1	Phonics Screening Weeks
Year 2	SATS weeks
Years 3, 4 & 5	Assessment weeks T6
Year 6	Term 5

This school will **not** authorise the taking of any leave at the following times:

- The start of the academic year (weeks 1 and 2)
- During periods of revision for examinations
- During timetabled examinations

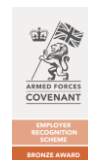
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Flexi- schooling

There might be circumstances when families would prefer a flexi-time schooling approach for their child (s444(3)(a) of the 1996 Education Act). Any 'school age' child who goes to school at all must attend regularly, but absence 'with leave' does not count as irregular attendance. During such absences the child is officially at school, but is effectively being educated off site. (S)he is therefore covered for insurance and attracts full funding to the school. Such arrangements are at the discretion of the school. (s 444 (9)). Arrangements for off-site / flexi - schooling can be made with an alternative provider e.g. a special school.

If parents wish to educate their child partly at school and partly at home, they must first write to the head teacher but must be aware that the head teacher can refuse such a request. In every case, the head teacher will fully explore the proposal and make a decision based on the best interests of the particular child and the other children in the school. Parents who decide to educate full or part-time at home should contact their local council. The council can make an 'informal enquiry' to check that a child is getting a suitable education at home. They can also serve a School Attendance Order if they think a child needs to be taught at school.

The request for flexi-schooling might sometimes come from the school to a parent, in these instances, the school will provide all the learning materials that the child requires whilst they are being educated at home. A flexi-schooling contract will be drawn up that shows clearly how the child will progress to full-time education as soon as possible.

Traveller Children

Travellers are protected from prosecution if they can prove the following:

- They are engaged in business which requires travel from place to place
- The children attend school as the nature of the work permits

Where the traveller children are known to be resident on site and not attending school, the absence should be treated as for any other pupil.

Part-time Education

All pupils of compulsory school age are entitled to a full-time education. In very exceptional circumstances there may be a need for a temporary part-time timetable to meet a pupil's individual needs. For example where a medical condition prevents a pupil from attending full-time education and a part-time timetable is considered as part of a re-integration package. A part-time timetable must not be treated as a long-term solution. Any pastoral support programme or other agreement must have a time limit by which point the pupil is expected to attend full-time or be provided with alternative provision. In agreeing to a part-time timetable a school has agreed to a pupil being absent from school for part of the week or day and therefore must record it as authorised absence.

Child Performers

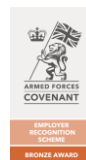
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Head teacher may grant leave of absence for a pupil to undertake employment during school hours for the purpose of taking part in a performance. Legislation states that a local authority licence must first be obtained and the head teacher should only authorise those days set out on the license. If the license does not specify dates it is at the discretion of the head teacher to authorise leave of absence. Head teachers should be sympathetic to requests that are supported by a licence, as long as the school remains satisfied that this will not have a negative effect on a child's education.

Monitoring Attendance and Lateness

If a new pupil has a history of poor attendance at their previous school, there will be immediate communication with the AAP and a pre-start attendance meeting will be held. The school has a 'five-step' approach to monitoring absence and lateness. It will not always be appropriate to progress through all of these steps or even to carry them out in the order listed. The Head Teacher and the AAP will agree which step to take when using discretion and discussing each case carefully. When a CAF is in place, attendance will always be monitored and may be listed as an improvement target.

Attendance meetings have a set agenda and format for the minutes which are saved on the school network. There are separate meetings for FS children, who are not at statutory schools age and for children in Years 1-6. Where appropriate, meetings to discuss children in FS will make good use of Sure Start and the Family Liaison Officer will following up on children in Years 1-6.

'Five Steps'

1. First day calling for all pupils, identify children causing concern, FLO visits as appropriate
2. Monthly meetings with AAP to identify pupils with attendance below 90%, monitoring trends in pupil attendance and lateness, allocation of FLO / CLO support
3. Referral to AAP
4. Invitation to school Attendance Clinic or Panel or to CAF meeting
5. Issue FPN, formal letter from AAP leading to prosecution if there is no improvement (eg after 10 or more unauthorised absences during a 6 week period)

Step 1: Details

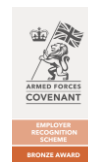
- Parent/carers have a duty to telephone or email the school before 09:15 and give a reason for their child's absence
- If no contact is received from parent / carer, the administrator sends a text message
- If no response to the text message, the Family Liaison Officer makes a telephone call
- If no response to the telephone call, the Family Liaison Officer makes a note to follow up and absence is unauthorised
- Family liaison officer makes a follow-up telephone call / makes a home visit / leaves a note of visit
- Day 2 – if FLO is unable to contact parent, administrator sends letter number 1
- Day 4 – If no response to letter number 1, administrator sends letter number 2
- Day 6 If child is not in school, AAP notified but if child is in school, previous absence is unauthorised

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Records of reasons for absence are computerised by administrators (SIMS). When a referral to AAP is made, the administrator's log and school attendance meeting minutes will be available as evidence.

Roles and Responsibilities

Attendance Administrator:

It will be the responsibility of the attendance administrator/s to ensure that:

- attendance and lateness records are up to date and confirmed by parents
- parents are contacted by 09:30 on the first day of absence
- texts are sent to parents requesting reasons for absence
- the class and head teacher knows of children, individual absences or patterns of absence causing concern
- attendance monitoring figures are submitted to LA, governors, HT, AASSA, as requested
- they meet regularly with the AAP to complete referral forms (*Medway Code of Practice on Attendance Matters August 2017*)
- all regulations are adhered to
- parents are well informed about the law and the school policy
- they complete an annual quality assurance document with the AAP
- they are present at and provide information for monthly attendance meetings, clinics and panels
- they complete all statutory returns
- they manage the applications for leave of absence in line with procedures outline on the form

Teachers:

- liaise with the Attendance Administrator / Family Liaison Officer and school leaders regarding any child with low or unexplained absences and frequent lateness
- speak to parents about unexplained absences and advise them to keep the school informed
- attend meetings and home visits as requested
- October parent consultations: discuss attendance with parents and complete the comment on the written report
- February parent consultations: discuss attendance with parents and complete the comment on the written report
- July: complete the comment on the written report. Ensure that pupils with 100% attendance receive a certificate

FLO, AAP intervention:

When attendance is below the percentages set out below, the FLO or AAP will carry out any actions that have been agreed at the monthly attendance meeting.

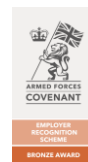
- 95% - 100% attendance - FLO and school deal with attendance issues
- Below 95% attendance – AAP referral (See AAP timeline below)

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The AAP Timeline to Proceedings is set out below (*see Progression for use of Penalty Notices – Medway EWS*).

- Joint letter sent from AASSA and school to all parents in September
- AASSA receives a referral at monthly meeting for any child who is causing concern
- AAP makes a home visit and reports back
- AAP sends a Court Penalty Notice Warning letter
- Consider opening a CAF
- If CAF used and no improvement invite parent to school attendance panel
- Either monitor pupil attendance for up to 4 weeks or instigate court proceedings
- If no reason for CAF identified, monitor and refer to AAP who will issue Fixed Penalty Notice
- Issue up to two FPN in any year and consider court proceedings

Lateness

Every child who arrives after 08:45 a.m. must enter school by the main entrance and report to reception where their name and reason for lateness will be recorded. The pupil will be marked as late before registration has closed. **After 09:15, they will be marked as late after registration and this will count as an unauthorised absence.** Frequent lateness will be discussed with parents at open evening and may be referred to the FLO and/or AAP. It can provide grounds for prosecution.

Children Missing Education

All children are entitled to a full time education. Local authorities have a duty to establish, as far as it is possible, the identity of children of compulsory school age who are missing education in their area. A child going missing from education is a potential indicator of abuse or neglect. The schools will follow up on children that go missing from education to guard against the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual exploitation as well as potential risks of travelling to conflict zones, FGM and forced marriage.

If a child is missing education, the school must notify the Local Authority and follow their procedures, including when to delete the child's name from the register. It is essential that schools comply with this duty so that local authorities can follow up on any child who might be in danger of not receiving an education and who might be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The administrator will post the child's details on the School to School website (*teachernet.gov.uk*) and notify the Child Missing Education Officer of the name of the missing child.

Home Educated Children

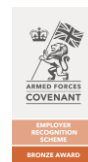
On receipt of written notification to home educate, schools must inform the local authority that the pupil is to be deleted from the admission register. Schools should not seek to persuade parents to educate their children at home as a way of avoiding excluding the pupil or because the pupil has a poor attendance record. However, schools should not seek to prevent parents from educating their children outside the school system. There is no requirement for parents to obtain the school or local

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authority's agreement to educate their child at home. Parents nevertheless have a duty to ensure their child of compulsory school age receives suitable full time education.

Appendices

- (i) Attendance Clinic Contract
- (ii) Application Form for Leave of Absence
- (iii) Leave of Absence Letter 1
- (iv) Leave of Absence Letter 2
- (v) Leave of Absence Letter 2a
- (vi) Leave of Absence Letter 3
- (vii) No Reason for Absence Letter
- (viii) Lateness Letter
- (ix) Attendance Brochure
- (x) AASSA Referral Form for Schools
- (xi) Fixed Penalty Notice Letter
- (xii) Invitation to Attendance Clinic Letter
- (xiii) Attendance Meeting Minutes Format
- (xiv) Attendance Letter
- (xv) Guidance for the Head Teacher on 'Exceptional Circumstances' (see below)

An initial impact assessment under the school's Single Equality Scheme has been carried out for this policy	
A	Positive impact is explicitly intended and very likely
B	An adverse impact is unlikely, and on the contrary the policy has the clear potential to have a positive impact by reducing and removing barriers and inequalities that currently exist
C	An adverse impact is unlikely. On the contrary there is potential to reduce barriers and inequalities that currently exist. There is insufficient evidence, however, for this assessment to be made with as much confidence as is desirable
D	Adverse impact is probable or certain, since certain groups will be disadvantaged, either proportionately or absolutely, or both. Remedial action is therefore necessary
E	Adverse impact is probable or certain for certain groups but the policy as a whole can nevertheless be justified. PLEASE NOTE: Selecting this assessments will necessitate the need for legal advice

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Author	J Heyes
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A school
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excellence in
PSHE education
PSHE
Active Learning


UNICEF
ALPHA DIVISION
LEVEL 1


Bronze
Eco-Schools
Bronze Award


LOTTERY FUNDED


SCHOOL GAMES
BRONZE


ARMED FORCES
COVENANT
EMPLOYEE
RECOGNITION
SCHEME
BRONZE AWARD


Brompton
Sunshines


SureStart

Appendix (xv)

Guidance for the Head Teacher on 'Exceptional Circumstances'

The fundamental principles for defining 'exceptional' are:

- rare, significant, unavoidable and short
- 'unavoidable' means an event that could not reasonably be scheduled at another time

Below are some guiding principles that support decisions and provide consistency when granting leave during the school term. This guidance has no statutory authority but forms part of this policy which has been agreed by governors.

The decision to authorise absence is at the head teacher's discretion based on their assessment of the situation.

Term times are for education and children and families have 175 days off school to spend time together, including weekends and school holidays. Therefore, the default school policy should be that absences will not be granted during term time and will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances.

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 is not considered an exceptional circumstance.

Absences to visit family members are not normally granted during term time if they could be scheduled for holiday periods or outside school hours. Children may however need time to visit seriously ill relatives.

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Absence for a bereavement of a close family member is usually considered an exceptional circumstance but for the funeral service only, not extended leave.

Absences for important religious observances are taken into account but only for the ceremony and travelling time, not extended leave. This is intended for one off situations rather than regular or recurring events.

Schools may wish to take the needs of the families of service personnel into account if they are returning from long operational tours that prevent contact during scheduled holiday time.

Schools have a duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with special educational needs or disabilities.

Families may need time together to recover from trauma or crisis. Guidance on authorised absence in schools (October 2014)

It is acceptable to take a student's previous record of attendance into account when making decisions.

Head teachers can determine the length of the authorised absence as well a

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UNICEF
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LEVEL 1


Bronze
Eco-Schools
Bronze Award


LOTTERY FUNDED


SCHOOL
GAMES
BRONZE


ARMED FORCES
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