Attendance Policy

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Author/ Reviewer:	Paul Stockley
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1. Aims

At Bradway Primary School, we believe that excellent attendance is essential in enabling children to fulfill the educational opportunities they are given. These opportunities include their attainment, wellbeing and chances in all aspects of life. Championing great attendance is a key aspect of our whole-school culture and ethos, it is the responsibility of everyone within the school community. Every school day matters.

There is a direct link between children with great attendance and their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.

Overall absence rate over the key stage by attainment in reading, writing and maths at the end of key stage 2 in England

	2018/19	
	Number of eligible pupils	Overall absence rate
Did not meet expected standard	180,469	4.7%
Met expected standard	315,315	3.5%
Met higher standard	62,797	2.7%
Total	558,581	3.8%

https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/the-link-between-absence-and-attainment-at-ks2-and-ks4/2018-19

Bradway Primary School is an inclusive school which values all pupils and has the highest expectations for their attendance. We recognise that some pupils find it more difficult than others to attend school and we will work hard to remove barriers and build strong relationships with families to ensure pupils have the right support in place to attend school. We will use resources such as the pupil premium funding for school improvement in the area of pupil premium children's attendance. Good attendance is also heavily involved in our efforts on special educational needs support, mental health and wellbeing, behaviour, bullying and the curriculum.

We will promote good attendance, reduce absence (including persistent and severe absence), act early to address patterns of absence and promote and support punctuality in attending lessons. This will be driven by the school attendance champion but is the responsibility of all staff, the governing body and the Local Authority. This policy also takes into account the Human Rights Act 1998, the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the Race Relations Act 2000.

School attendance champion: Paul Stockley – Headteacher

School attendance governor: Joanna Skorokhod

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [working together to improve school attendance](#) from the Department for Education (DfE), and refers to the DfE's statutory guidance on [school attendance parental responsibility measures](#). These documents are drawn from the following legislation setting out the legal powers and duties that govern school attendance:

- Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
- Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
- Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
- [The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (and 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 amendments)](#)
- [The Education (Penalty Notices) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013](#)

This policy also refers to the DfE's guidance on the school census, which explains the persistent absence threshold.

In January 2024, the Government launched a new national campaign to improve school attendance, which includes stronger measures to tackle persistent absence. They say that 'being in school has never been more valuable with standards continuing to rise. 89% of schools are now rated good or outstanding, up from 68% in 2010. We are constantly seeing the success of our reforms rising up the rankings in maths, reading and science. Just this month, England was ranked 11th in the world for maths, up from 27th in 2009, and in May, England was named 'best in the west' for primary reading.'

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The governing board

It is our view that improved attendance can only be achieved if is regarded as a shared responsibility of the staff, governing body, pupils, parents, headteacher and the wider community.

The governing board is responsible for:

- Promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school
- Making sure staff receive adequate training on attendance
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The attendance link governor is Joanna Skorokhod. Attendance issues will be discussed at the curriculum and staffing committee.

3.2 The Leadership Team

The leadership team is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy at the school, actively promoting it and ensuring a whole-school approach

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the Attendance Policy and adequately trained to address attendance issues

- Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors

- Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils

- Monitoring the impact of any implemented attendance strategies

- Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

- Make home visits when necessary

- Challenge lateness

- Support referral to outside agencies as required

3.3 The Attendance Champion

The designated senior leader is responsible for:

- Leading attendance across the school, creating a whole school ethos of 'Every School Day Matters'

- Meet termly with the linked Inclusion and Attendance Specialist to discuss the school improvement plan objective linked to pupil premium attendance, pupils severely absent (below 50% attendance), pupils on reduced timetables, pupils learning off site, persistent absentees (90% or less) and next steps to progress to excellent attendance.

- Offering a clear vision for attendance improvement

- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes

- Having an oversight of data analysis

- Devising specific strategies to address areas of poor attendance identified through data

- Arranging calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data (see section 7)

- Benchmarking attendance data to identify areas of focus for improvement

- Providing regular attendance reports to school staff and reporting concerns about attendance to the designated senior leader responsible for attendance and the headteacher

- Advising the headteacher (authorised by the headteacher) when to issue fixed-penalty notices

The attendance champion is Paul Stockley and can be contacted via the school phone number 0114 2363723

3.5 Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for recording attendance on a daily basis, using the correct codes, and submitting this information to the school office. This includes those being educated off-site or on reduced timetables. They will also:

- Contribute to a whole school approach for good attendance. Every school day matters.

- Contribute to the analysis of attendance data to identify causes and patterns of absence when appropriate

- Form positive relationships with pupils and families

- Support SLT with documenting interventions and relevant information should legal proceedings be made necessary. Use CPOMs to record these.

3.6 School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls and messages from parents about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system

- Implement systems to report, record and monitor the attendance of all pupils

- Ask the appropriate member of SLT/ staff to provide them with more detailed support on attendance when it is persistent absence, severe absence, unauthorised absence, unreported absence or Absence Request Forms

Pupil premium funding will provide additional support to school office staff to follow up on the attendance reporting and monitoring of pupil premium pupils. This is in line with the school improvement plan.

3.7 Parents/Carers

Parents/carers are expected to:

- Aim to make sure their child attends every day on time

- Call the school, email school or use the Scholarpack App messaging service to report their child's absence before 9am on the day of the absence and each subsequent day of absence, and advise when they are expected to return

- Provide the school with more than 1 emergency contact number for their child

- Ensure that, where possible, appointments for their child (doctors, dentist etc) are made outside of the school day

- Tell the school if their child is experiencing difficulties by talking to their teacher or Headteacher

- Inform the school if there is a change in circumstances that might influence their child's attendance

- Avoid taking your child on holiday during term-time. When this is not possible, send an Absence Request Form

3.8 Pupils

Pupils are expected to:

- Attend school every day on time

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register, and place all pupils onto this register.

We will take our attendance register at the start of the first session of each school day and once during the second session. It will mark whether every pupil is:

- Present

- Attending an approved off-site educational activity

- Absent
- Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

Any amendment to the attendance register will include:

- The original entry
- The amended entry
- The reason for the amendment
- The date on which the amendment was made
- The name and position of the person who made the amendment

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

We will also record:

- Whether the absence is authorised or not
- The nature of the activity if a pupil is attending an approved educational activity
- The nature of circumstances where a pupil is unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances

We will keep every entry on the attendance register for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Pupils must arrive in school by 8.40am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8.55am and will be kept open until 9.10am. The register for the second session will be taken at 1.15pm and will be kept open until 1.30pm.

4.2 Unplanned absence

The pupil's parent/carer must notify the school of the reason for the absence on the first day of an unplanned absence by 9am or as soon as practically possible by

- calling and/or leaving a message on 0114 236 3723
- messaging on the Scholar Pack App
- emailing enquiries@bradway.sheffield.sch.uk

We will mark absence due to illness as authorised unless the school has a genuine concern about the authenticity of the illness.

If the authenticity of the illness is in doubt, the school may ask the pupil's parent/carer to provide medical evidence, such as a doctor's note, prescription, appointment card or other appropriate form of evidence. We will not ask for medical evidence unnecessarily.

If the school is not satisfied about the authenticity of the illness, the absence will be recorded as unauthorised and parents/carers will be notified of this in advance.

4.3 Planned absence

Attending a medical or dental appointment will be counted as authorised as long as the pupil's parent/carer notifies the school in advance of the appointment. Please use an Absence Request Form.

However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the pupil should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

The pupil's parent/carer must also apply for other types of term-time absence as far in advance as possible of the requested absence. Go to section 5 to find out which term-time absences the school can authorise.

4.4 Lateness and punctuality

A pupil who arrives late:

- Before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code
- After the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code

Persistent lateness will be challenged by a member of the senior leadership team. We will work with the pupil and family to overcome barriers to good punctuality. Lateness affects pupil attainment and wellbeing.

4.5 Following up unexplained absence

Where any pupil we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, without reason, the school will:

- Call the pupil's parent/carer on the morning of the first day of unexplained absence to ascertain the reason. If the school cannot reach any of the pupil's emergency contacts, the school may carry out a safe and well check. If this is not successful we may contact the police.
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use and input it as soon as the reason for absence is ascertained – this will be no later than 5 working days after the session
- Call the parent/carer on each day that the absence continues without explanation to ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary. If absence continues, the school will consider involving an education welfare officer

4.6 Reporting to parents/carers

The school will regularly inform parents about their child's attendance and absence levels at parents evening appointments and in their end of year report. You can view your child's attendance on the Scholar Pack App.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to a pupil during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion, including the length of time the pupil is authorised to be absent for.

The school considers each application for term-time absence individually, taking into account the specific facts, circumstances and relevant context behind the request.

Any request should be submitted as soon as it is anticipated and, where possible, at least 4 weeks before the absence, and in accordance with any leave of absence request form, accessible via the Schools Homepage under Policies>Attendance>Absence Request Form. The headteacher may require evidence to support any request for leave of absence.

Valid reasons for **authorised absence** include:

- Illness and medical/dental appointments (see sections 4.2 and 4.3 for more detail)

- Religious observance – where the day is exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the pupil's parents belong. If necessary, the school will seek advice from the parents' religious body to confirm whether the day is set apart

- Traveller pupils travelling for occupational purposes – this covers Roma, English and Welsh gypsies, Irish and Scottish travellers, showmen (fairground people) and circus people, bargees (occupational boat dwellers) and new travellers. Absence may be authorised only when a traveller family is known to be travelling for occupational purposes and has agreed this with the school, but it is not known whether the pupil is attending educational provision

5.2 Legal interventions and sanctions

If your child is not attending school regularly we will try to get them back to school. We will contact you to raise concerns and arrange meetings with you to help support them to re-engage in their learning. In some circumstances we may suggest a Parenting Contract. A Parenting Contract is a voluntary agreement between School and the parent, it can also be extended to include the child and MAST members. Following this, if there is no improvement, we will need to ask the Local Authority for help.

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

If issued with a fine, or penalty notice, each parent must pay £60 within 21 days or £120 within 28 days. The payment must be made directly to the local authority.

Penalty notices can be issued by a headteacher, local authority officer or the police.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year

- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission

- Where an excluded pupil is found in a public place during school hours without a justifiable reason

If the payment has not been made after 28 days, the local authority can decide whether to prosecute or withdraw the notice.

6. Strategies for promoting attendance

We will use a range of systems to support improved attendance. Support offered to families will be child centred. These may include:

- Extended Parent Meetings/ SEN Parent Meetings

- Attendance Parent Meetings

- Referral to the Sheffield Attendance and Inclusion service

- Referrals to support agencies e.g MAST

- Pupil Voice/ School Council

- Peer Mediators

- PSHE

- Additional learning and/or behaviour support

- Emotionally Based School Avoidance support materials

- Friendship Stop

- The SEN Hub

7. Attendance monitoring

Pupils attendance will be monitored and is viewed by the Local Authority and other agencies if a pupil's attendance is a cause for concern.

Every term, the School Attendance Champion and office staff will provide SLT with the attendance data for year groups. This is also included in the School Governors report. Attendance data is discussed at termly pupil progress meetings and is shared with parents/carers within end of year reports. In addition, persistent and severe absence is communicated at parents evening meetings.

7.1 Monitoring attendance

The school will:

- Monitor attendance and absence data half-termly, termly and yearly across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern

Pupil-level absence data will be collected each term and published at national and local authority level through the DfE's school absence national statistics releases. The underlying school-level absence data is published alongside the national statistics. The school will compare attendance data to the national average, and share this with the governing board.

7.2 Analysing attendance

The school will:

- Analyse attendance and absence data regularly to identify pupils or cohorts that need additional support with their attendance, and use this analysis to provide targeted support to these pupils and their families
- Look at historic and emerging patterns of attendance and absence, and then develop strategies to address these patterns

7.3 Using data to improve attendance

The school will:

- Provide regular attendance reports to class teachers, and other school leaders, to facilitate discussions with pupils and families
- Use data to monitor and evaluate the impact of any interventions put in place in order to modify them and inform future strategies

- Meet with the linked Inclusion and Attendance Specialist termly

7.4 Reducing persistent and severe absence

Persistent absence is where a pupil misses 10% or more of school, and severe absence is where a pupil misses 50% or more of school.

The school will:

- Use attendance data to find patterns and trends of persistent and severe absence

- Hold regular meetings with the parents of pupils who the school (and/or local authority) considers to be vulnerable, or are persistently or severely absent, to discuss attendance and engagement at school

- Provide access to wider support services to remove the barriers to attendance

- Utilise (where appropriate) Pupil Voice activities, friendship groups, PSHE, additional learning support, behaviour support and Emotional Based School Avoidance support materials

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed as guidance from the local authority or DfE is updated, and as a minimum every two years by Paul Stockley (Headteacher). At every review, the policy will be approved by the full governing board.

9. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies:

- Child protection and safeguarding policy

- Behaviour policy

Appendix 1: attendance codes

The following codes are taken from the DfE's guidance on school attendance.

Code	Definition	Scenario
/	Present (am)	Pupil is present at morning registration
****	Present (pm)	Pupil is present at afternoon registration
L	Late arrival	Pupil arrives late before register has closed
B	Off-site educational activity	Pupil is at a supervised off-site educational activity approved by the school
D	Dual registered	Pupil is attending a session at another setting where they are also registered
J	Interview	Pupil has an interview with a prospective employer/educational establishment
P	Sporting activity	Pupil is participating in a supervised sporting activity approved by the school
V	Educational trip or visit	Pupil is on an educational visit/trip organised, or approved, by the school
W	Work experience	Pupil is on a work experience placement

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Pupil has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Pupil has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Pupil has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances

I	Illness	School has been notified that a pupil will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Pupil is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Pupil is taking part in a day of religious observance
S	Study leave	Year 11 pupil is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and traveller absence	Pupil from a traveller community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Pupil is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Pupil is absent for an unknown reason (this code should be amended when the reason emerges, or replaced with code O if no reason for absence has been provided after a reasonable amount of time)
O	Unauthorised absence	School is not satisfied with reason for pupil's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Pupil arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Pupil of non-compulsory school age is not required to attend
Y	Unable to attend due to exceptional circumstances	School site is closed, there is disruption to travel as a result of a local/national emergency, or pupil is in custody
Z	Pupil not on admission register	Register set up but pupil has not yet joined the school

#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day