

Attendance Policy 2021-22

BRACKENSDALE
SPENCER ACADEMY

Approved by: Joanna McGregor Date: 01.09.21

Last reviewed on: 01.09.21

Next review due by: 01.09.22

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1.1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines to all staff, governors and parents.

1.2 Attendance Core Statement

Good attendance is essential if pupils are to take full advantage of school and gain the appropriate skills, which will equip them for life.

The school aims to achieve good attendance by operating an attendance policy within which staff, pupils, parents, local community and Education Welfare Support Service who can work in partnership. The school will monitor attendance and ensure quick and early intervention of a problem, if identified.

All staff will encourage good attendance and liaise with home and other agencies when this is appropriate. Good attendance will be seen as an achievement in its own right and recognised as such by school.

The attendance policy is based on the premise of equal rights for all.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

Aims:

To create a culture in which good attendance is normal by:-

- Improving the quality of school life.
- Creating a culture in which good attendance is the norm.
- Demonstrating to pupils, parents and staff that the school values good attendance.
- Recognising that good, regular attendance is an achievement.
- Being consistent in implementation, both in terms of rewards and sanctions.
- Valuing the individual and their circumstances.

Objectives:

To achieve improved communication with parents, in relation to regular attendance.

To ensure that all school staff are involved in taking responsibility for encouraging regular attendance.

To promote an effective working relationship with the Educational Welfare Officer (EWO).

1.4 Roles and responsibilities

Identified person/s to take responsibility to provide information. This is the Attendance team reporting back to the Senior Leadership Team to enable them to be kept informed of progress and involved in decision-making.

The Attendance Officer and Education Welfare Officer (EWO) to establish clear allocation of tasks and responsibilities in terms of referral and action planning.

All personnel in school to have a commitment to consistency and supporting the attendance policy's aims and objectives.

1.5 Targets

- 1) To have an effective means of collecting, collating and monitoring attendance information.
- 2) To ensure that such data is accessible and used effectively by school managers and all staff in conjunction with the EWO.
- 3) To keep parents, pupils and governors informed of policy and practice.

1.6 Attendance and Absence

Children are expected to attend school for the full 190 days of the academic year, unless there is a good reason for absence. There are two types of absence:-

- Authorised (Principal and/or Attendance Officer approves pupil absence)
- Unauthorised (Principal and/or Attendance Officer does not approve pupil absence)

It is expected that parents or carers will provide an explanation if the child is absent on the first day the absence occurs. This should be done by telephone or talking to a member of the admin team. If contact is not made by the parents/guardians, then the school will attempt to contact them on the first day of absence and then on each subsequent day. School will attempt to contact parents by phone or through a visit from the Attendance Officer or Education Welfare Officer (EWO). This may then be followed by letters or if deemed necessary Education Welfare Office (EWO) intervention.

If absence due to sickness is causing concern and the absence pattern is unexplained or made up of several isolated days, a child may be referred to the school nurse. The Principal and/or Attendance Officer may decide that they only authorise the absence on receipt of suitable medical evidence. This could include a prescription form, appointment card or conversation with health personnel.

The Principal and/or Attendance Officer will regularly remind parents of the importance of good attendance and punctuality through the school newsletter.

Each week a pupil from KS2 and a pupil from FS2/KS1 who have achieved 100% attendance in the previous week will be chosen at random to receive an attendance trophy. This trophy will be presented in the weekly celebration assembly on a Friday afternoon. The two top classes for attendance each week will receive a reward on a Friday afternoon.

1.7 Completing Registers

The twice-daily requirements to register pupils should be perceived as an opportunity to welcome the children individually and formally. Registers are taken every morning and afternoon that school is open to pupils. Totals are noted for fire and emergency purposes. Each absence is recorded with the correct code using the symbols advised by Derby City Council's Education Welfare Service.

The Attendance team monitors the registers after registration every morning and contacts the parents of first day absentees who have not notified the school.

The marking of registers can sometimes become so routine that the importance is lost. However, incomplete or inaccurate registers are unacceptable. Registers provide the daily record of the attendance of all pupils. They are legal documents that may be required in a court of law.

1.8 Lateness and Late Collection

Key Stage 2 (years 3- 6) sessions begin at 8.55am. Key Stage 2 pupils are late from 9:00am.

Key Stage 1 (years 1 and 2) and FS sessions start at 8:55am. Key Stage 1 and FS pupils are late from 9.00am.

All pupils are expected to be in school for registration at these times. Pupils who are consistently late not only disrupt their own education but also that of others.

All lateness from 9:15am will be treated as unauthorised absence and the same procedures for absence will be followed.

Children who are not collected at the end of the school day will be accompanied to our front reception desk where they will be supervised until collection. Children who are collected late on a regular basis may be raised as a safeguarding concern with outside agencies.

1.9 Monitoring and Referral

Attendance is monitored regularly by the Attendance team who will report concerns to the Principal/Senior Leadership Team.

In the case of children in Foundation Stage (FS1 and FS2) who may not have reached statutory school age, parents of children with poor attendance may still be contacted in order to establish future patterns of good attendance.

The EWO meets regularly with the Attendance team and will take appropriate action in the case of unacceptable absences, including legal action if necessary.

2.0 Persistent Absence

The school will monitor for “persistent absence”, defined as attendance of 90% or less. Parents will be invited to meetings with the Principal and/or Attendance team to talk about the reasons for their child’s absences and will be given strategies to support an increase in attendance. If parents do not attend these meetings or their child’s absences continue then a referral may be made to the EWO for further action.

2.1 Absences during Term-Time

Following Government Policy, the Principal will no longer authorise absences during term-time, except in very exceptional circumstances. If you feel you have an exceptional circumstance then a Leave of Absence form needs to be submitted to school. This will be followed by a letter from School, where you will be told of the decision of your request.

We ask that ALL routine medical appointments are made after school and in holiday times. We would, where possible, request that all other appointments be outside of school hours also.

2.2 Fixed Penalty Notices

The Local Authority can issue penalty notices for unauthorised absence. (The penalty is currently £60 per child, per parent). Penalty notices may be issued in the following circumstances:-

- If a child is taken on holiday, or extended visit, without the school being contacted in writing in advance.
- If a child is taken out of school eg. for a holiday and the request for absence during term-time has not been authorised by the Principal.
- If a child has an unexplained absence of more than 10 days in total, including medical absence which cannot be supported by appropriate evidence. (Appropriate evidence would include appointment cards, prescription forms or a telephone call from a medical professional).
- The Local Authority may also issue a penalty notice if there have been prolonged concerns about attendance which the family have failed to address - this usually follows involvement with the Education Welfare Service.

2.3 Children Missing in Education

Concerns may arise where children go missing from school during the course of a school day, and where children do not attend school because they have been withdrawn (unless parents have elected to home educate) or have not been registered. All groups are potentially at risk. Where children are absent from school, the “First Day Contact” process ensures that schools are immediately in touch with parents/carers to advise on a child missing education and schools are expected to assist parents or carers in reporting the child missing to the Police should this prove necessary. Vulnerable children should be prioritised as part of the process and if there is any cause for concern about their safety, a referral must be made to Social Care and the Police. The Attendance team should inform the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) of any child who has not attended for 10 school days without reasonable explanation. The EWO should make extensive enquiries, for example home visit, liaison with Children’s Social Care, housing and notify the school if it appears that the child has moved out of the area. If no information is forthcoming the EWO should notify the Children Missing Education Officer, who will carry out further checks with Health, Department for Work and Pensions and S2S to try to ascertain the child’s whereabouts. Full guidance is given in the respective Local Authority’s “Children Missing Education” protocols.

There is a statutory requirement on Local Authorities to identify children not in receipt of education which applies to any children of compulsory school age who are not on a school roll, or who have left a school with destination unknown and who are not receiving suitable education otherwise than being at school (for example, at home, independent/private school or in alternative provision). This is critical from a safeguarding, as well as an educational, perspective. Deletions from the admissions and attendance registers must be made in line with the provisions of Regulation 8 of the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 (SI2006/1751). The name of a pupil of compulsory school age may only be deleted from the attendance register on the grounds prescribed in this Regulation. Under regulation 12 (3), schools must also inform their local authority of deletions of compulsory school age pupils due to ceasing to attend the school; being withdrawn to be educated outside the school system, being certified by the school medical officer as unlikely to return; being in custody or being permanently excluded.

