





Attendance Policy

Signed:	
	Scott Metcalfe - Chair of Governors

Signed:	
	David Walton-Jonas - Headteacher

Reviewed – September 2024	Next Review – September 2025
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Introduction and background

Broadway Junior School recognises that positive behaviour and good attendance are central to raising standards and pupil attainment. This policy is written with the above statement in mind and this policy underpins our school ethos to:

- Promote children's welfare and safeguarding.
- Ensure every child has access to the full time education to which they are entitled.
- Ensure that children succeed whilst at school.
- Ensure that children have access to the widest possible range of opportunities when they leave school.

For our children to gain the greatest benefit from their education it is vital that they attend regularly and be at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. Any absence affects the pattern of a child's schooling and regular absence will seriously affect their learning. Any pupil's absence or late arrival disrupts teaching routines and so may affect the learning of others in the same class. Ensuring a child's regular attendance at school is a parental responsibility and permitting absence from school without a good reason creates an offence in law and may result in prosecution.

Promoting Regular Attendance

Helping to create a pattern of regular attendance is everybody's responsibility – parents, all members of school staff and children.

To help us all to focus on this we will:

- Give parents/carers details on attendance in our Bulletins and online.
- Report to parents/carers termly on their child's attendance.
- Contact parents/carers should their child's attendance fall below the school's target for attendance.
- Celebrate good attendance by displaying individual and class achievements in our weekly 'Celebration' Assembly.
- Recognise good or improving attendance through incentives where appropriate.

Understanding types of absence

Every half-day absence from school has to be classified by the school (not by the parents), as either AUTHORISED or UNAUTHORISED. This is why information about the cause of any absence is always required. Authorised absences are mornings or afternoons away from school for a good reason such as illness, medical/dental appointments which unavoidably fall in school time, emergencies or other unavoidable cause. Unauthorised absences are those which the school does not consider reasonable and for which no leave has been given. This type of absence can lead to the Authority using sanctions and/or legal proceedings.

This includes:

- Parents/carers keeping children off school unnecessarily.
- Truancy during the school day.
- Absences which have never been properly explained.
- Children who arrive at school too late to get a mark.

- Shopping, looking after other children or birthdays, for example.
- Day trips and holidays in term time which have not been agreed as exceptional circumstances.

Whilst any child may be off school because they are ill, sometimes they can be reluctant to attend school. Any problems with regular attendance are best sorted out between the school, the parents and the child. If a parent thinks their child is reluctant to attend school then we will work with that family to understand the root problem. We can use outside agencies to help with this such as the School Nurse or the school's Attendance and Inclusion Officer. If a child who is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need plan (or who is Cared for Child (CFC)) has an attendance pattern that is of concern to the school, we will contact TFC and make them aware of our concerns.

Persistent Absenteeism (PA)

A pupil becomes a 'persistent absentee' when they miss 10% or more schooling across the school year for whatever reason. Absence at this level is doing considerable damage to any child's education and we need parents' full support and co-operation to tackle this. We monitor all absence and the reasons given thoroughly. Any case that is seen to have reached the PA mark or is at risk of moving towards that mark is given priority and we will inform the parents/carers immediately.

PA pupils are tracked and monitored carefully; we also combine this with academic tracking where absence affects attainment. All our PA pupils and their parents are subject to specific support within school to address the underlining reason for absence. This may include the School Nurse, Pastoral Support or Attendance Officer. We may also use individual incentive programmes, individual targets and participation in group activities around raising attendance.

Absence Procedures

If your child is absent the parent/carer must follow these procedures:

- Contact us as soon as possible on the first day of absence before 9:00am
- Speak to a member of staff at the school gates between 8.30am and 8.40am
- Call into school and report to reception.

If your child is absent we will telephone you and/or text you on the first day of absence if we have not heard from you. Where a child's attendance has become a concern we may need to:

- Visit the child's home address, where necessary.
- Invite you to discuss the situation with the Pastoral Support Officer.
- Invite you in to discuss the situation with the Headteacher.
- In some circumstances, welfare calls will be made to the Police.
- Refer the matter to the Attendance Officer (AO) if the child's attendance does not improve following contact from the Headteacher.

See Appendix 2

Attendance School Monitoring

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for:

- Setting high expectations of all school leaders, staff, pupils and parents/carers
- Making sure school leaders fulfil expectations and statutory duties, including:
 - Making sure the school records attendance accurately in the register, and shares the required information with the DfE and local authority
 - Making sure the school works effectively with local partners to help remove barriers to attendance, and keeps them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Recognising and promoting the importance of school attendance across the school's policies and ethos
- Making sure the school's attendance management processes are delivered effectively, and that consistent support is provided for pupils who need it most by prioritising staff and resources
- Making sure the school has high aspirations for all pupils, but adapts processes and support to pupils' individual needs
- Regularly reviewing and challenging attendance data and helping school leaders focus improvement efforts on individual pupils or cohorts who need it most
- Working with school leaders to set goals or areas of focus for attendance and providing support and challenge
- Monitoring attendance figures for the whole school and repeatedly evaluating the effectiveness of the school's processes and improvement efforts to make sure they are meeting pupils' needs
- Where the school is struggling with attendance, working with school leaders to develop a comprehensive action plan to improve attendance
- Making sure all staff receive adequate training on attendance as part of the regular continued professional development offer, so that staff understand:
 - The importance of good attendance
 - That absence is almost always a symptom of wider issues
 - The school's legal requirements for keeping registers
 - The school's strategies and procedures for tracking, following up on and improving attendance, including working with partners and keeping them informed regarding specific pupils, where appropriate
- Making sure dedicated training is provided to staff with a specific attendance function in their role, including in interpreting and analysing attendance data
- Holding the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- The implementation of this policy at the school
- 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
- Working with the parents/carers of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to develop specific support approaches for attendance for pupils with SEND, including where school transport is regularly being missed, and where pupils with SEND face in-school barriers
- Communicating with the local authority when a pupil with an education, health and care (EHC) plan has falling attendance, or where there are barriers to attendance that relate to the pupil's needs
- Communicating the school's high expectations for attendance and punctuality regularly to pupils and parents/carers through all available channels
- Sharing information from the school register with the local authority, including:
 - Notifying the local authority when a pupil's name is added to or deleted from the school admission register outside of standard transition times
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, or who have been marked with an unauthorised absence for a continuous period of 10 school days
 - Providing the local authority with the details of pupils who the school believes will miss 15 days consecutively or cumulatively because of sickness

The designated senior leader responsible for attendance

The designated senior leader is David Walton-Jonas, Headteacher, who is responsible for:

- Leading, championing and improving attendance across the school
- Setting a clear vision for improving and maintaining good attendance
- Evaluating and monitoring expectations and processes
- Having a strong grasp of absence data and oversight of absence data analysis
- Regularly monitoring and evaluating progress in attendance
- Establishing and maintaining effective systems for tackling absence, and making sure they are followed by all staff
- Liaising with pupils, parents/carers and external agencies, where needed
- Building close and productive relationships with parents/carers to discuss and tackle attendance issues
- Creating intervention or reintegration plans in partnership with pupils and their parents/carers

- Delivering targeted intervention and support to pupils and families

School Administration

The school attendance officer is responsible for:

- Monitoring and analysing attendance data
- 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
- Working with education welfare officers to tackle persistent absence
- Advising the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

Class Teachers

Class Teachers are responsible for recording attendance for both morning and afternoon sessions on a daily basis, using the correct codes and submitting this information to the school office by 9.00am and 1.00pm each day. Throughout the year, opportunities will arise (via Parents Evening, for example) where copies of school attendance reports will be shared to further inform discussions relating to attainment and progress.

School Office Staff

School office staff will:

- Take calls from parents/carers about absence on a day-to-day basis and record it on the school system
- Transfer calls from parents/carers to the appropriate person in school, where appropriate, in order to provide them with more detailed support on attendance

Parents

Where this policy refers to a parent, it refers to the adult the school and/or local authority decides is most appropriate to work with, including:

- All natural parents, whether they are married or not
- All those who have parental responsibility for a child or young person
- Those who have day-to-day responsibility for the child (i.e. lives with and looks after them)

Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend school every day, on time.

Attendance and Inclusion Officer

Parents are expected to contact school at an early stage and to work with the staff in resolving any problems together. This is nearly always successful. If difficulties cannot be sorted out in this way, the school may refer the child to the Attendance Officer (AO) from the Local Authority. They will also try to resolve the situation by agreement but, if other ways of trying to improve the child's attendance have failed and unauthorised absences persist, these Officers can use sanctions such as Penalty Notices or prosecutions in the Magistrates Court.

Full details of the options open to enforce attendance at school are available from the school or the Local Authority. Alternatively, parents or children may wish to contact the AO themselves to ask for help or information. They are independent of the school and will give impartial advice. Their telephone number is available from the school office or by contacting the Local Authority.

Lateness

Good time keeping is a vital life skill which will help our children as they progress through their school life and out into the wider world. Poor punctuality has a detrimental effect on children's education. If a child misses the start of the day they can miss learning and important information and news for the day. As well as disrupting lessons, it can be embarrassing for the late arriving child and can also encourage longer absence.

How we manage lateness:

- The school day starts at 8.30am and we expect our children to be in class by this time.
- Please note that if your child enters school via the school office entrance after 8.40am they will still receive a late mark.
- Registers are marked and submitted to the office by 8:50am.
- At 9.10am the registers will be closed. In accordance with the Regulations, if children arrive after this time they receive a mark that shows them to be on site, but this does not count as a present mark and it will mean they have an unauthorised absence.
- If children have a persistent late record parents are asked to meet with the Headteacher to resolve the problem, but parents can approach school at any time if they are having problems getting their child to school on time.
- We will encourage good punctuality by being good role models to our children

Cared for Children (CFC) and children subject to a Child Protection Plan

The attendance of vulnerable pupils such as CFC, those subject to a Child Protection Plan or a Child in Need Plan will be monitored closely in order to alert external agencies of potential difficulties as soon as possible and offer support to the pupil and their family.

Children with chronic medical conditions

School supports children who fit into this category by following the statutory guidance provided by the Department of Education (DfE). The guidance documents are:

- Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs: 2013
- Supporting pupils in school with medical conditions: 2015
- Alternative provision: 2013

Holidays in Term Time

The 2013 amendment to the 2006 Education Regulations states that a leave of absence during term time shall not be granted unless there are "exceptional circumstances." The Headteacher will view each case on its merit and in most cases will not authorise holidays during term time. Where there is evidence of unauthorised term time leave (currently 10 or more continuous absences) in accordance with the Local Authority Code of Conduct, the school will request the Local Authority (LA) to consider issuing of a Penalty Notice.

See Appendix 1

Leavers

If a child is leaving other than at the end of Year 6, parents are asked to:

- Give the school full information about their plans including date of move, new address or at least the town you will be moving to, new school and start date when known, and reasons for moving. (Transfer forms is available from the school office.)
- Confirm the school has your current mobile phone number.
- Take our school's compliments slip so the new school can easily contact us and records can be transferred.
- Let us know when they move.

Children Missing Education

When pupils leave and the school does not have the above information a child is considered to be a Child Missing Education. This means that the LA has a legal duty to carry out investigations, which will include liaising with TFC, the Police and other agencies, to try to track and locate the child.

The school will follow the Local Authority Guidelines for dealing with children missing from education which include:

- Informing the Local Authority: If the child has moved authority and we have an address for them, we will contact the Local Authority immediately, as once the receiving authority have taken responsibility for the child, they may be removed from our register.
- Keeping the child on roll for four weeks following their last attendance.
- Following published guidelines in relation to the Prevent strategy.

If a child who is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need plan, or who is a CFC or has an EHCP is missing from education, we will contact TFC and make them aware of our concerns.

People responsible for this policy and its implementation

The Headteacher and the Governing Body will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and review it on a yearly basis.

Appendix 1

together for
children
SUNDERLAND

Fixed Penalty Notices for irregular attendance at school Important information for parents

1 OVERVIEW

Regular school attendance is vital for children to reach their full potential. If your child is absent for any reason, it is important that you communicate fully with the school. However new national guidance is to be implemented from September to manage irregular attendance at school.

Penalty notices are issued as an alternative to prosecution where parents have failed to ensure their child attends school regularly. They can be used in cases where absence has not been authorised by a head teacher and can be in respect of any unauthorised absence, irrespective of reason.

The notices are used to prevent the need for court action, for example, when support has not been engaged with or is not appropriate (for example, leave of absence during term time).

Changes from September 2024 are shown →

2 LEAVE

Head Teachers are unable to grant leave of absence during term time unless there are **exceptional circumstances**.

Generally, a need or desire for a holiday or other absence for the purpose of leisure and recreation **would not** constitute an exceptional circumstance.

3 ABSENCE

A Fixed Penalty Notice may be issued if there are **5 days / 10 sessions** of absence in a period of **10 school weeks** (where absence has not been authorised).

A notice may be issued where the 5-day level of consecutive absence has not been reached, for example, if there are several periods of leave.

4 AMOUNT

The first penalty notice is **£160** if paid within 28 days, reduced to **£80** if paid within 21 days.

A second penalty notice is **£160** to be paid within 28 days.

A third penalty notice cannot be issued. **Legal action** may result (for example, prosecution).


5 FAQ'S

For further information please see Sunderland City Council website page on school attendance:

<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/>

Or DfE Working together to improve school attendance document:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>



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Appendix 2 - In School Letter Stages

Stage One Letter

Initial Concern Attendance Period: 05/09/2024 to DATE -

Dear family member,

As you are aware, Broadway Junior School monitor the attendance of its pupils. As part of our commitment to improving outcomes for children, we formally monitor attendance to identify any pupil records which cause concern.

During this routine monitoring period, your child's attendance is currently %. This represents X sessions attended out of a possible X. If this were to continue, we may need to seek support from the Local Authority meaning we can plan for improvement.

This letter is designed, at this stage, only to bring this to your attention.

You have followed attendance procedures and made school aware of the reasons for absence but this figure is below the expected level of attendance and we have an obligation to make you aware of this percentage and work with you to see an improvement.

At Broadway Junior School, we value (and reward) good attendance. Research shows that your child is more likely to achieve their academic attainment if they have a good attendance record. Please ensure that your child's attendance continues to improve.

We can support you and your child around any attendance issues you may have; therefore, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs. Robson or Jade Hanratty on 0191 528 3058 should you wish to discuss this further.

Stage 2 Letter

Attendance Period: 05/09/2024 to DATE -

Dear family member,

During our weekly attendance monitoring, we have noticed X's attendance has declined and is currently % which works out at X sessions attended out of a possible «Possible».

We would like to discuss this with you. Our Pastoral Support Officer Jade will contact you on between 9am and 12noon.

As you are aware, we have an obligation to make you aware of this percentage and work with you to see an improvement. At Broadway Junior School, we value and reward good attendance as research shows that your child is more likely to achieve their full academic potential if they have a good attendance record.

We would appreciate your support to make sure you X's attendance improves. We will continue to monitor this closely.

Stage 3 Letter

Serious Attendance Concerns Attendance Period: 05/09/2024 to DATE -

Dear Name

As you are aware, Broadway Junior School monitor the attendance of its pupils. As part of our commitment to improving outcomes for children, we formally monitor attendance to identify any pupil records which cause concern. As a parent/carer you have a legal responsibility to ensure your X attends school regularly. As X has an unsatisfactory level of attendance, which is % and there have been X of unauthorised absence to date.

Attendance will be formally monitored between to During this monitoring period X will be expected to have 100% attendance.

You are required to attend an Attendance Meeting in school on..... and with me.

All children of compulsory school age who are registered pupils at a school must attend regularly and punctually. It is your responsibility as a parent to ensure this. Should your child fail to attend regularly and punctually the school may consider referral to the local authority.

The Local Authority has a duty to ensure that you fulfil your statutory responsibilities in relation to school attendance of your child. You may be invited to answer questions under caution in accordance with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984. The Local Authority will then decide whether to take legal action against you which could mean applying for an Educational Supervision Order, issuing you with a penalty notice - which is a fixed penalty fine or prosecuting you under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996. Since August 2024, the fine for school absences across the country is £80 if paid within 21 days, or £160 if paid within 28 days.

In the case of repeated fines, if a parent receives a second fine for the same child within any three-year period, this will be charged at the higher rate of £160.

Fines per parent will be capped to two fines within any three-year period. Once this limit has been reached, other action like a parenting order or prosecution will be considered. If you're prosecuted and attend court because your child hasn't been attending school, you could get a fine of up to £2,500 or up to 3 months' imprisonment.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact school on 0191 528 3058 to discuss this further.