

Attendance policy

Brackenhill Primary School



Approved by:

Date:

Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:

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Aims

We are committed to meeting our obligations with regards to school attendance by:

1. Promoting good attendance and reducing absence, including persistent absence
2. Ensuring every pupil has access to full-time education to which they are entitled
3. Acting early to address patterns of absence

We will also support parents to perform their legal duty to ensure their children of compulsory school age attend regularly, and will promote and support punctuality in attending lessons.

Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the [school attendance guidance](#) 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:

1. Part 6 of [The Education Act 1996](#)
2. Part 3 of [The Education Act 2002](#)
3. Part 7 of [The Education and Inspections Act 2006](#)
4. [The Education \(Pupil Registration\) \(England\) Regulations 2006](#) (and [2010](#), [2011](#), [2013](#), [2016](#) amendments)
5. [The Education \(Penalty Notices\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Regulations Feb 2022](#)

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

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board is responsible for monitoring attendance figures for the whole school on at least a termly basis. It also holds the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

1. Implementation of this policy at the school
2. Monitoring school-level absence data and reporting it to governors
3. Supporting staff with monitoring the attendance of individual pupils
4. Issuing fixed-penalty notices, where necessary

The attendance officer / HLSOs

The school attendance officer/ HLSOs:

1. Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
2. Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
3. Works with the education safeguarding officer to tackle persistent absence

4. Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
5. Advises the headteacher when to issue fixed-penalty notices

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.

School admin staff

School admin staff are expected to take calls from parents about absence and record it on the school system.

Attendance register

We will keep an attendance register using SIMS, 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 the start of 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

See appendix 1 for the DfE attendance codes.

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 8:55am on each school day.

The register for the first session will be taken at 8:55am. The register for the second session will be taken at KS1 1:00pm and KS2 1:30pm.

Authorised and unauthorised absence

Unplanned absence and follow up procedure

All children's attendance will continue to be monitored daily.

Please call the school office on 01274 578 286 and press option 1 to report a child's absence. If we don't hear from you, a phone call will be made home and if we are unable to get in touch with you, a home visit will be conducted by the HSLO team.

If we are concerned about your child's attendance you will receive an attendance letter/nudge letter from attendance safeguarding team.

If your child's attendance falls below 93%, they will be put on Red Attendance Record Card and their attendance will be monitored for six weeks.

If a child is absent for more than 3 days, a home visit is carried out.

You will be invited to attend a support meeting with the Head teacher or Educational Safeguarding Officer at the end of this attendance monitoring period.

If attendance continues to be a concern, your child may be referred to an Educational Safeguarding Officer.

Whilst we understand that your child/ren is prone to illness and it can have an effect on his /her attendance, it is very important that your child attends school regularly, this will ensure that you are working with us to improve your child's attendance.

In addition to that there will be a traffic lights attendance chart displayed in the classes every half term. Pupils' names will be added to the attendance group they are in. They will also receive slips according to their attendance group. Please support your child to be in the green group.

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 bring hospital letters or appointment cards to show it to the HSLO team to authorise the absence.

Please call the school office on 01274 578 286 and press option 1 to report a child's absence

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.

Lateness and punctuality

We take punctuality very seriously at Brackenhill as coming late disrupts your child's learning, and causes problems with class registrations. The school's doors open at 8:45am and close at 8:55am. Any child who arrives late and after this time should go through the office.

Approval for term-time absence

The headteacher will only grant a leave of absence to pupils during term time if they consider there to be 'exceptional circumstances'. A leave of absence is granted at the headteacher's discretion.

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

Unauthorised leave of absence during term time

A leave of absence of three days (6 sessions) or more was taken during term time without the school's consent in the 6 weeks prior to a notice being requested.

Process:

1. Parent completes school's Leave of Absence Request form;
2. Headteacher (or delegated person) considers every application individually and decides that "exceptional circumstances" are not present;
3. Parent is notified in writing that the leave of absence request has been refused, detailing the reasons why, and the consequences should the leave be taken, including the requesting of a penalty notice from Bradford Council;
4. Parent continues to take the pupil out of school during term time, and unauthorised absence is recorded;
5. Unauthorised Leave of Absence Penalty Notice Request is submitted
6. Penalty Notice is issued.

A decision has been made by Bradford Council to change their approach to situations where families take two or more periods of unauthorised leave in a 12-month period, or one period of four or more weeks of continuous unauthorised leave during term time. In these instances, Bradford Council will utilise the option to start legal proceedings via the magistrates' court, instead of issuing a penalty notice. This means that parents may be liable to receive a significantly higher fine (up to £2,500 per child, per parent) if found guilty, as well as receive a criminal record, which may be reportable to employers (for example, via a DBS Check). In rare circumstances, magistrates can consider a custodial sentence for up to 3 months. This change will come into force from 1st April 2023.

Poor Attendance

A pupil has 6 or more sessions of unauthorised absence in the 6 weeks (60 Sessions) prior to a notice being requested and their attendance has not been below 80% (24 sessions of absence) in the last 12 weeks (120 Sessions) prior to a notice being requested.

Requests will not be considered where the request is made more than 6 weeks after the last session of unauthorised absence.

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance are to be used as an early intervention tool to address low level absence concerns before the situation becomes entrenched. Research conducted by the DfE found that penalty notices were most effective when used to address occasional absences where a child's rate of attendance started to fall below 90%. We would encourage schools to make use of this tool, as quite often it's the Penalty Notice Warning Letter that can have the biggest impact in bringing a child's attendance rate back over 90%.

Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance should not be used to address entrenched levels of pupil attendance, as they will have little impact. It is for this reason that Bradford Council will not accept poor attendance penalty notice requests where a child's rate of attendance is below 80% in the last 12 weeks. In these situations, schools are encouraged to apply Stage 2 of the Staged Intervention Approach to Attendance to try and address the situation.

More information on Penalty Notices for Poor Attendance is below:

Process:

1. Pupil's absence triggers school's criteria for poor attendance intervention (i.e. attendance falls below 95%). School Letter 1 is issued making parent aware of concerns regarding the pupil's attendance. The pupil's poor attendance continues and unauthorised absence continues to be recorded. The number of unauthorised absences is coming close to meeting Bradford's criteria for issuing a penalty notice. School Letter 2 is issued making parent aware of this, and that a penalty notice may be requested if further unauthorised absence occurs -
2. Further unauthorised absence is recorded. Poor Attendance Penalty Notice Request form is completed and submitted.
3. Bradford Council issues a Warning Letter, providing the parent with 20 school days to rectify the situation or a penalty notice will be issued.
4. Further unauthorised absence is recorded - Penalty Notice issued. OR No further unauthorised absence is recorded - No Further Action

Strategies for promoting attendance

At Brackenhill, we reward good attendance throughout the year.

Weekly Class Attendance

Every week the class with the overall highest attendance wins a certificate and 15mins extra play time to be arranged by the teacher.

Pupil Attendance

Every half term pupils will be sent home with a slip

- RED :- Requires improvement (below 90%)
- AMBER :- Can be improved (90-97%)
- GREEN :- Well Done ! (97-100%)

Children with high attendance will receive a mystery prize.

Class Attendance

Every half term the class with the highest attendance will receive a voucher to spend as a reward for the class. Children collectively decide what to spend the voucher on.

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 | Exclusion | 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 |

Appendix 2: Attendance letter 1



Brackenhill Primary School

Dracup Road, Bradford, BD7 4HA

Telephone: 01274 578286

E-mail: office@brackenhillprimary.co.uk www.brackenhill.bradford.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sobia Mir

Dear *<Name of Parent>*

As part of our commitment to improving the attainment of our pupils we monitor pupil attendance on a regular basis. During our regular monitoring of pupil attendance, we identify any pupil whose attendance causes concern. We then issue a first Letter to register our concern with parents. We are therefore writing to you due to *<Name of pupil>*'s current level of attendance:

| | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Attendance | <i><current attendance></i> % |
| Authorised Absence | <i><current AA></i> % |
| Unauthorised Absence | <i><current UA></i> % |

The information below shows how attendance can affect your child's future progression.



| |
|---|
| Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year Excellent attendance! These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can, leading to better prospects for the future. Pupils will also get into a habit of attending school which will help in the future. |
| 95%: 10 days absence a year These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and form a habit of attending school regularly. Pupils who take a 2 week holiday every year can only achieve 95% attendance. |
| 90% and below: 19 days + absence a year The Government classes Young People in this group as "Persistent Absentees", and it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. Parents of young people in this group could also face the possibility of legal action being taken by the Local Authority. |

If you have any queries or would like to talk to anyone about attendance, please do not hesitate to contact the school office on 01274 578 286

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Headteacher



Appendix 3: Headteacher letter 2



Brackenhill Primary School

Dracup Road, Bradford, BD7 4HA

Telephone: 01274 578286

E-mail: office@brackenhillprimary.co.uk www.brackenhill.bradford.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sobia Mir

Dear Parents/Carers,

Since we wrote to you on <date of 1st letter>, <name of pupil>'s attendance has failed to improve significantly, and is now <attendance percentage>%. This is below what we expect and to put this into perspective 90% attendance is equivalent to missing 19 days of school per year – your child will spend more time at home than at school this academic year!

Ongoing low attendance is a factor often linked to low levels of academic success. It is important that low attendance is dealt with as early as possible to prevent poor habits of attendance forming with <name of pupil>. Poor attendance habits now will make it increasingly difficult for you to ensure your child attends school regularly as they get older.

We wish to help <name of pupil> to improve <his/her> attendance. If you would like to discuss <name of pupil>'s attendance, please contact <school contact> on <school contact number> and I will be happy to talk with you and if required arrange a meeting.

We would appreciate your support to make sure <name of child>'s attendance improves. The school will continue to monitor the situation and may refer your child's absence to Bradford Council for consideration of a fixed penalty notice fine or legal action if unauthorised absence continues to occur.

Thank you for your cooperation

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Headteacher



Appendix 4: Headteacher letter 3



Brackenhill Primary School

Dracup Road, Bradford, BD7 4HA

Telephone: 01274 578286

E-mail: office@brackenhillprimary.co.uk www.brackenhill.bradford.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sobia Mir

Dear **<Name of Parent>**

Thank you for your recent leave during term time request form.

On this occasion I am not able to authorise **<Name of Pupil>**'s leave of absence from **<Date >** to **<Date >**, for the purpose of **<insert reason>**.

I have no wish to deprive families of an extended period of leave away from Brackenhill Primary School, but my first concern has to be the educational development of **<Name of Pupil>**. Requests for leave during term time are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered the social, emotional and cultural reasons for the leave, whether the leave is exceptional, as well as **<Name of Pupil>**'s overall level of attendance, academic attainment and the impact any leave may have on your child's learning during their time away.

If you decide to go ahead with your proposed leave during term time, **<Name of Pupil>**'s absences will be marked as unauthorised. I should warn you that unauthorised absences are referred to Bradford Council who may under certain circumstance consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice or other legal action in relation to unauthorised absences.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please call the office on 01274 578 286 to make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Headteacher



Appendix 6: Headteacher letter 4



Brackenhill Primary School

Dracup Road, Bradford, BD7 4HA

Telephone: 01274 578286

E-mail: office@brackenhillprimary.co.uk www.brackenhill.bradford.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sobia Mir

Dear **<Name of Parent>**

Thank you for providing more information on the reasons for **<Name of Pupil>**'s recent absence from Brackenhill Primary School

On this occasion I am not able to authorise **<Name of Pupil>**'s leave of absence from **<Date >** to **<Date >**, for the purpose of **<insert reason>**.

I have no wish to deprive families of an extended period of leave away from Brackenhill Primary School, but my first concern has to be the educational development of **<Name of Pupil>**. Requests for leave during term time are never taken lightly and in taking this decision I have considered the social, emotional and cultural reasons for the leave, whether the leave is exceptional, as well as **<Name of Pupil>**'s overall level of attendance, academic attainment and the impact any leave may have on your child's learning during their time away.

<Name of Pupil>'s absences have now been marked as unauthorised. I should warn you that unauthorised absences are referred to Bradford Council who may under certain circumstance consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice or other legal action in relation to unauthorised absences.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please call the school office on 01274 578 286 to make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Headteacher



Appendix 6: Headteacher letter 5



Brackenhill Primary School

Dracup Road, Bradford, BD7 4HA

Telephone: 01274 578286

E-mail: office@brackenhillprimary.co.uk www.brackenhill.bradford.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sobia Mir

Dear <Name of Parent>

We have become aware that <Name of Pupil> has been absent Brackenhill Primary School from <Date > to <Date > for the purpose of taking leave during term time. We have attempted to contact you on several occasions, but unfortunately, we have not been able to get in touch with you. Details of our attempts to contact you are listed below:

| Method Attempted: | Date(s) Attempted |
|--|-------------------|
| Phone Call to all telephone numbers listed | |
| Email to all email addresses listed | |
| Home Visit to Home Address | |
| Letter to Home Address | |

As the school is unaware of any exceptional circumstances for this absence, on this occasion I am not able to authorise <Name of Pupil>'s absences during this time.

I have no wish to deprive families of an extended period of leave away from Brackenhill Primary School, but my first concern has to be the educational development of <Name of Pupil>. Requests for leave during term time are never taken lightly, but because you have not told us about the reasons for <Name of Pupil>'s absence, I am unable to consider the social, emotional and cultural reasons for the leave, and whether the leave could be considered exceptional.

<Name of Pupil>'s absences have now been marked as unauthorised. I should warn you that unauthorised absences are referred to Bradford Council who may under certain circumstance consider issuing you with a Penalty Notice or other legal action in relation to unauthorised absences.

If you wish to discuss this matter further, please call the school office on 01274578 286 to make an appointment to see me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Nair Ishtiaq
Headteacher

