BROADWATER
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Attendance and Absence Policy 2026-2027

Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2)

Broadwater is a Christian School. We will enable children to become wise, confident, successful learners with the motivation, skills and responsibility to make a positive difference in God's world. Our vision is underpinned by the values we live by.

The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22

It is this fruit that, in partnership with Parents/carers, we will instil in the children of our school.

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1. Aims

Our school aims to meet its obligations with regards to school attendance by:

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

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

For a child to reach their full educational achievement a high level of school attendance is essential. We are committed to providing an education of the highest quality for all our children and endeavour to provide an environment where all children feel valued and welcome. Parents/carers and children play a part in making our school so successful. Every child has a right to access the education to which he/she is entitled. Parents/carers and teachers share the responsibility for supporting and promoting excellent school attendance and punctuality for all. It is our duty to consistently strive to achieve a goal of 100% attendance for all children. Every opportunity will be used to convey to children and their parents/carers the importance of regular and punctual attendance.

For our children to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered it is vital your child is at school, on time, every day the school is open unless the reason for the absence is unavoidable. The routines children develop around attendance and punctuality at school are the same as the expectations of any future employer in the world of work. High attainment, confidence with peers and staff, and future aspirations depend on good attendance.

2. Legislation and guidance

This policy meets the requirements of the working together to improve 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:

- 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.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 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.

3.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- 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

3.3 The attendance officer

The school attendance officer:

- Monitors attendance data across the school and at an individual pupil level
- Reports concerns about attendance to the headteacher
- Works with SENcO, DSL and Designated Schools Worker to tackle persistent absence
- Arranges calls and meetings with parents to discuss attendance issues
- Advises the headteacher when to refer absences to Pupil Entitlement

3.4 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.

3.5 School office staff

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

4. Recording attendance

4.1 Attendance register

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.)

Every entry in the attendance register will be preserved for 3 years after the date on which the entry was made.

Children in Years 3 to 6 must arrive in school by 8.45 on each school day. Children in Early Years, Years 1 and 2 must arrive in school by 8.55 am.
The register for the first session will be taken at 8:45 (KS2) and 8:55 (EY and KS1) and will be kept open for 30 minutes at which time the registers will be closed. 9:15 Year3-6 and 9:25 EY, Year 1 and Year 2. The register for the second session will be taken at 1:30pm and will be kept open until 1:50.

4.2 Unplanned absence

Parents/carers are required to ring each day of an unplanned absence unless a specific absence time frame has been given by the doctor or school. You must contact the school office via email, telephone (answerphone message) or absence slip (delivered to the office) by 8:50 am, or as soon as is practically possible (see also section 7).

Absence due to illness will be 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 parents/carers 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.

4.3 Planned absence

Medical or dental appointments
Missing registration for a medical or dental appointment is counted as an authorised absence; advance notice is required for authorising these absences.
However, we encourage parents/carers to make medical and dental appointments out of school hours where possible. Where this is not possible, the child should be out of school for the minimum amount of time necessary.

4.4 Lateness and Punctuality

A child who arrives late but before the register has closed will be marked as late, using the appropriate code. A child who arrives after the register has closed will be marked as absent, using the appropriate code. It is vital that your child arrives in school on time and prepared for the school day. If your child arrives after this time they must enter the school by the main entrance and sign in at Reception (see attendance register section).

4.5 Following up absence

Where any child we expect to attend school does not attend, or stops attending, the school will:

- Follow up on their absence with their parent/carer to ascertain the reason, by contacting the parent/carer.
- Contact West Sussex admissions and Missing in Education department.
- Ensure proper safeguarding action is taken where necessary
- Identify whether the absence is approved or not
- Identify the correct attendance code to use

4.6 Reporting to Parents/carers

A child's attendance record is reported annually in the written end-of-year report.

5. Authorised and unauthorised absence

5.1 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. A leave of absence is granted entirely at the headteacher's discretion. Absence requests should be made to the headteacher in advance using the form attached. Copies of the form can be printed from the school website or obtained from the school office (see appendix 2).

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.

Punctuality and attendance are important because:

- Being punctual is a skill that your child will need for life. It shows respect for others and that school is important
- Good attendance means that your child will be able to get the most out of school and make the most of the opportunities offered to them. Regular attenders make better progress, both socially and academically
- It will ensure that there are no gaps in their learning. This will mean that the important

foundations for future learning will be strong
- Units of work are planned for in depth and if your child is away from their learning they may miss out on acquiring vital skills and concepts
- Children spend a small percentage of time at school. There are 175 days in the year for holidays and other activities. Please make every effort to book holidays and visit friends and family in this time only. It is important for your child to be at school the other days so that they can achieve and attain well
- 80% attendance is equivalent to taking a year off school every five years, 90% is equivalent to half a year off every 5 years!

Unauthorised Absence

The school will not authorise holiday absence during school term time and you should plan holidays on non-school days only. You should be aware that absence from school may result in a fixed penalty notice and a fine.

Regular unauthorised absence is monitored by the school and may result in one or more of the following:

- A warning letter
- A request for an interview to discuss attendance
- Referral to the Local Authority or (in the case of welfare concerns) a referral to Social Services.

If your child has 10 unauthorised sessions (a session is half a day) in a 10-week period the local authority can issue a **fixed penalty notice** to Parents/carers

For the first occasion a child is absent without authority the FPN is £160, and a parent is given the opportunity to pay within 21 days at a rate of £80.

For the second occasion the same child is absent without authority the FPN is £160.

For the third occasion the same child is absent without authority a FPN may not be issued and instead the case may be referred direct to a Magistrates Court or alternative interventions may be considered.

If the school refers a period of absence that is 15 consecutive school days or more; Pupil Entitlement: Investigation may consider a FPN is not appropriate. In these instances, the matter may instead be brought directly before the Magistrates Courts.

5.2 Reducing persistent absence and Attendance Monitoring

The attendance officer monitors child absence on a monthly basis.
Parents/carers are expected to call the school in the morning if their child is going to be absent due to ill health (see section 4). Parents/carers are expected to ring each day is the child continues to be ill unless they have a medical diagnosis which warrants a longer period of absence.
If the school notices a pattern of absence then this will be monitored and the family contacted.
If after contacting Parents/carers a child's absence continue to rise, we will consider involving the relevant West Sussex Educational support service (eg Early Help). The persistent absence threshold is 10%. If a child's individual overall absence rate is greater than or equal to 10%, the child will be classified as a persistent absentee.

Child-level absence data is collected 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 collects and stores attendance data on BROMCOM. This data is used to track the attendance of individual children, identify whether or not there are particular groups of children whose absences may be a cause for concern, and monitor and evaluate those children identified as needing intervention and support.

5.3 Legal sanctions

The local authority can fine parents/carers for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.
If issued with a penalty notice, parents/carers must pay £80 within 21 days or £160 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

- Named contact in the school to support the family
- Follow up telephone calls from the school to the family home

7. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed yearly by the headteacher. At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing board.

8. Links with other policies

This policy is linked to our Child protection and safeguarding policy and the Behaviour policy

9. Appeals

The decision of the Headteacher to authorise or not authorise an absence is final. There is no appeal process.

Appendix 1: attendance codes

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

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

Code	Definition	Scenario
Authorised absence		
C	Authorised leave of absence	Child has been granted a leave of absence due to exceptional circumstances
E	Excluded	Child has been excluded but no alternative provision has been made
H	Authorised holiday	Child has been allowed to go on holiday due to exceptional circumstances
I	Illness	School has been notified that a child will be absent due to illness
M	Medical/dental appointment	Child is at a medical or dental appointment
R	Religious observance	Child is taking part in a day of religious observance

S	Study leave	Year 11 child is on study leave during their public examinations
T	Gypsy, Roma and Traveler absence	Child from a Traveler community is travelling, as agreed with the school
Unauthorised absence		
G	Unauthorised holiday	Child is on a holiday that was not approved by the school
N	Reason not provided	Child 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 child's absence
U	Arrival after registration	Child arrived at school after the register closed

Code	Definition	Scenario
X	Not required to be in school	Child 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 child is in custody
Z	Child not on admission register	Register set up but child has not yet joined the school
#	Planned school closure	Whole or partial school closure due to half-term/bank holiday/INSET day

Appendix 2: Request for Leave in school time

Broadwater C of E Primary School
Request for Leave from Learning in School Time
2026-2027

Pupils are **only** in school for 190 days each year.
There are 175 other days for holidays and other activities.
80% attendance represents **1 day off a week**.

90% attendance represents **1 day off per fortnight.**

Please be aware any holiday taken 5 days or more may incur a WSCC Fixed Penalty Notice

How to use this form:

- Use for all absence requests other than sickness,
- Return to the school before the date of requested absence.

Guidance:

- Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during school term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Parents/Carers requesting absence during term time should provide full details in order for the Head Teacher to decide if there are exceptional circumstances.

Parent/Carer to complete this section:

Name of Child 1:	Class:
Name of Child 2:	Class:
Name of Child 3:	Class:
Name of Child 4:	Class:
Is this the first request for absence this academic year?	Yes / No

First Day of Absence:		Number of school days requested:	
Final Day of Absence			

Reason:

(continue on separate page if necessary)

Name:	Signature:	Date:

School Office to complete this section:

Child 1: Name Last Year Attendance	%	Green (More than 95%) Satisfactory Amber (85% to 95%) Needs Improvement Red (Less than 85%) Unsatisfactory		
Current Attendance	%			
Leave from learning taken so far this year		days	Register code for this request:	
Child 2: Name Last Year Attendance	%	Green (More than 95%) Satisfactory Amber (85% to 95%) Needs Improvement Red (Less than 85%) Unsatisfactory		
Current Attendance	%			
Leave from learning taken so far this year		days	Register code for this request:	
Child 3: Name Last Year Attendance	%	Green (More than 95%) Satisfactory Amber (85% to 95%) Needs Improvement Red (Less than 85%) Unsatisfactory		
Current Attendance	%			
Leave from learning taken so far this year		days	Register code for this request:	
Child 4: Name Last Year Attendance	%	Green (More than 95%) Satisfactory Amber (85% to 95%) Needs Improvement Red (Less than 85%) Unsatisfactory		
Current Attendance	%			
Leave from learning taken so far this year		days	Register code for this request:	

Head Teacher to complete this section:

Your request is approved and the absence as set out above is authorised.	
Your request is not approved and the absence as set out above is unauthorised.	
Signed:	Dated: