



# THE BROW C.P. SCHOOL

## ATTENDANCE FOR LEARNING POLICY

### SCHOOL STATEMENT

At The Brow C.P. School we aim to encourage all children to become enthusiastic lifelong learners. Our commitment to excellence in everything we do means that we have high expectations for everyone, in all aspects of school life, including attendance and punctuality. These are key in ensuring that children are able to access the curriculum and engage in all learning opportunities in order to make good progress.

### Rationale

This Policy outlines the underlying philosophy, purpose, nature, organisation and management of pupil attendance at The Brow C.P. School.

The Policy is a result of consultation with the wider school community and an analysis of existing attendance data to establish current absence trends. It aims to ensure the enjoyment and achievement for all pupils at The Brow C.P. School. It is based on the Local Authority's model policy for Halton schools.

### Principles

The Governing Board, Head Teacher and staff wish to ensure every child has the opportunity to:

1. Fully participate in school life
2. Enjoy and achieve
3. Feel that they are a valued member of the school community

## **Aims**

- To ensure that persistent absence (national average currently 2.7% primary) is no more than 2.5% primary by the end of 2018.
- To achieve 96% whole school attendance rate by 2018 (national average currently 96% primary), rising to 97% by 2019.
- To ensure there is a whole school, graduated response to improving punctuality and attendance.
- To identify groups of pupils and individuals whose absence causes concern
- To identify pupils persistently absent from school (10% or more absence)
- To track pupils' attendance and monitor and evaluate progress
- To identify main causes of absence and take action to address them

## **Legal Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance**

Under Section 7 of the 1996 Education Act, a parent is responsible for ensuring that a child of compulsory school age receives an efficient full time education that is suitable to the child's age, aptitude and ability and any special educational needs a child might have.

## **Parental Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance**

Parents/carers must:

- Contact school on first day of absence to provide a reason for non-attendance
- Contact school on each day of non-attendance if the absence continues beyond one day
- **Provide medical evidence for all absences if a child is absent for more than two consecutive days** (see Appendix 1 for examples of medical evidence)
- Request leave in advance for absences in term time by following school's 'Leave of term time absence' policy. (see Appendix 2)
- Work with the school and any other agency to resolve any difficulties which may affect regular school attendance
- Ensure that children arrive on time for school and are collected on time at the end of each day.

## **School Responsibilities Relating to School Attendance**

Mrs Webb (Headteacher) is the school attendance leader. As the attendance leader of the school she will work with staff to ensure:

- Registers are accurately marked and maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006
- A whole school approach to reinforce good attendance, teaching and learning to encourage all pupils to attend and achieve

- Attendance and punctuality is monitored regularly and consistently by Learning Mentor (Mrs Swift) and school's Education Welfare Officer (HBC).

Mrs Swift (Learning Mentor) will:

- Monitor punctuality and attendance weekly
- Seek evidence to support absences
- Work with the Headteacher, Office Staff, EWO and parents to discuss attendance concerns, send attendance and punctuality letters and set attendance targets.
- Monitor and review attendance targets
- Attend Attendance Planning Meetings
- Record reasons for absences under the relevant coding on school's attendance reporting system (SIMS)

Mrs Gibson (Clerical Assistant) will:

- Input present/absence information into school's attendance reporting system (SIMS)
- Make contact with parents on the first day of absence if they have not contacted school as outlined above
- Record messages left by parents regarding reasons for absence and pass on to school's Learning Mentor.
- Take and record medical evidence from parents/carers to support absences beyond two consecutive days.

Teachers will

- Ensure that registers are taken at the appropriate times each morning and afternoon and sent to the school office.
- Pass on any information they receive regarding absences to the school office.

## **Registration**

Parents should ensure pupils are on the playground in time to line up at 8.50 am.

Morning registration is at 8.55 am and afternoon registration is 12.55 pm for EYFS and KS1, and 1.25 pm for KS2.

A pupil arriving after 9 am and 12.55/1.25 pm will be marked late.

A pupil arriving after 9.30 am and 2 pm will be marked as late after the register closes. This is regarded as an unauthorised absence for the session, i.e. a half day absence.

A pupil arriving in school after morning or afternoon registration should follow school procedures for late arrivals:

- Report to reception
- Parent to record reason for late arrival in writing on late arrivals log.
- Go straight to class and order lunch (if late for morning registration).

Where a child(ren) is/are persistently arriving after 9 am on 3 or more occasions in a week, a letter will be sent to parents. If punctuality does not improve, parents will be invited in to school to discuss the lateness and seek a resolution. Where school action fails to bring about an improvement, the matter will be discussed with Education Welfare Service and consideration given to issuing a Penalty Notice.

### **Categorisation of Authorised and Unauthorised Absence**

The parent must provide an explanation for any period of absence from school, it is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to decide whether or not the absence will be authorised.

School will usually authorise absences where a child:

- Is unable to attend school due to illness – medical evidence may be requested.
- Requires **emergency** dental/medical appointments. Routine dental/medical appointments should be made **after school or during school holidays**. Parents/carers who request to take children out of school early to a medical/dental appointment must provide written evidence –e.g. appointment card.
- Is absent due to other exceptional circumstances – evidence may be required.

School will not authorise absence for:

- Shopping
- Birthdays
- Days out
- Looking after brothers/sisters
- Term time holidays (see Appendix 2)
- Illness where medical evidence is requested and not provided by a parent.

School will request medical verification where a pupil's attendance falls below 90% and for every absence beyond two consecutive days.

### **School Systems for Promoting Regular Attendance**

School will:

- Contact parents on first day of a pupil's absence, where no notification has been received from the parent/carer by 9.30 am to ensure the safety of the pupil.

- Analyse individual attendance pupil data to identify patterns of absence causing concern
- Contact parents by letter when pupils' attendance falls below 93% to highlight concerns
- Invite parents in to school for a discussion when a pupil's attendance is below 89%
- Invite parents to an Attendance Meeting with Head Teacher, Education Welfare Officer, Class Teacher, where attendance falls below 85%.
- Consider referral to Education Welfare when school action has failed to bring about an improvement in the pupil's attendance
- Use Individual Attendance Support Plans for pupils with attendance difficulties
- Use Parenting Contracts where exclusion or behavioural issues are affecting a pupil's attendance in school
- In partnership with LA use a full range of strategies, including legal interventions such as, Penalty Notices, to support improvement to attendance
- Provide appropriate support to pupils to ensure successful reintegration following long term absence
- Complete a Common Assessment where complex and significant factors requiring a multi-agency response is identified
- Implement a range of rewards for pupils with high levels of attendance and those improving attendance
- Work proactively to engage with parents and carers to resolve any difficulties which may be affecting school attendance, through parents evenings, pupil reviews and home-school agreements
- Provide a full and diverse curriculum to engage and motivate pupils, including use of SEAL to promote emotional well-being
- Make parents aware of the impact of poor attendance on attainment and progress.

### **Persons responsible for attendance in The Brow C.P. School**

- Head Teacher – Attendance leader
- Designated attendance officer (Learning Mentor)
- First day contact link – Mrs C. Gibson
- Governor with special responsibility for attendance
- Teachers and support staff

### **Review of Policy**

- This policy will be formally reviewed every 2 years
- This policy will be less formally reviewed on an annual basis
- A copy of this policy is available on the school website
- The policy is given in full to all parents of children who are starting at The Brow C.P. School.
- A paper copy of the policy is in the staff key documents file.
- The principles of this policy will be raised in the school newsletter regularly throughout the year.

- Any complaints arising from the implementation of this policy should be addressed to the Head Teacher in the first instance.

## **APPENDIX 1:**

### **MEDICAL EVIDENCE**

Appropriate medical evidence would include documents such as:

- Appointment letter/card from doctor/hospital
- Copy of prescription
- Medicine bottle/packet with prescription label
- Letter from GP/Consultant etc.

## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **LEAVE OF TERM TIME ABSENCE POLICY**

#### **MODEL POLICY - LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

##### **1. Aims**

The aim of this policy is to set out the way in which The Brow C.P. School monitors and promotes the attendance and punctuality of its pupils. The Brow C.P. School is committed to maximising the potential of every child and good attendance and punctuality are essential to this aim. We feel this will be achieved, with the support of parents/carers by ensuring that leave of absence will not be taken in school time, other than in exceptional circumstances. Absence during term time for any reason interrupts the continuity of teaching and learning and disrupts the educational progress of pupils.

##### **2. The Law**

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 Regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances

##### **3. Leave of Absence**

In exceptional circumstances The Brow C.P. School will consider a request for leave of absence for one period of absence during the academic year.

##### **4. Exceptional Circumstances**

The Head Teacher or person designated by the Head Teacher will determine what are considered to be exceptional circumstances.

The following may be examples of exceptional circumstances:

- To allow a pupil to return to their country of origin for family, religious or cultural reasons
- Unavoidable circumstances e.g. the parent/carer has inflexible leave allocation and this has been confirmed by the employer.
- A family member is seriously ill.
- There has been a death or significant trauma in the family and a leave of absence is deemed appropriate.

- Leave of absence for children of serving members of the Armed Forces.

## **5. Additional Information**

The Brow C.P. School will ensure that all parents/carers receive a copy of this Leave of Absence Policy which forms part of the school attendance policy.

- Parents/carers will be required to complete a leave of absence request form available from the school office and return it to school.
- Parents/carers may be required to attend an interview with the Headteacher to discuss their request for a leave of absence.
- Parents/carers will normally be notified of the outcome of their application for a leave of absence within 10 school days of the date of the application.

If the leave of absence is not agreed by the school, but the pupil is absent on the requested dates, the absence will be recorded as 'O' this will mean that the absence has been recorded on the school attendance register as unauthorised.

Where a pupil is absent from school without permission of the school, the parent/carer of the pupil may be issued with a £60.00 Penalty Notice per parent per child. If the notice remains unpaid after 21 days the penalty increases to £120.00. If the notice remains unpaid after 28 days the Local Authority may commence proceedings under section 444(1) of the 1996 Education Act in the Magistrates Court.

This policy will form part of The Brow C.P. School attendance policy.

**SAMPLE LETTER**

Dear Parent/Carer

Regular school attendance is essential to enable your child/children to maximise the educational opportunities available to them. Interruptions in school attendance means that your child/children may need to catch up on missed work and it can also affect their social life within school.

It is the school's responsibility to provide the best education possible. We can only do this if your child/children attend regularly.

From 1 September 2013 The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2013 amends the 2006 Regulations and makes clear that Head Teachers may not grant leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances

**Additionally**

- All requests for leave of absence in term time must be made in advance in writing on the leave of absence request form available from the school.
- The granting of leave of absence does not set a precedent for similar future requests and the frequency/duration of such leave periods will be considered as factors in any decision.
- Requests will be considered by the (*person designated*)
- The Local Authority will use the full range of sanctions where leave of absence is taken without the permission of the school.

I am sure that you will support the school by ensuring that requests for leave of absence are only made in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to discuss this matter further please contact >> or >>

Yours sincerely

## Appendix 2

Dear

I regret to inform you that I am unable to agree to your request for a leave of absence in respect of >>

I do not feel that the reasons given by you for requesting a leave of absence indicate exceptional circumstances.

I am sure that you will agree that it is in \_\_\_\_\_ best interest to attend school regularly in order to ensure that he/she achieves his/her full potential.

Whilst I understand that you may be disappointed by my decision, I trust that you understand that it has been taken with \_\_\_\_\_ best interest in mind.

I would remind you that I am required to inform the Education Welfare Service of any periods of unauthorised absence from school. The Education Welfare Service will then consider if any legal action or the issue of a Penalty Notice is appropriate.

Yours sincerely



The Brow C.P. School

Appendix 3

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM

A request for absence should be made in advance at least three weeks before the proposed leave of absence

PUPIL DETAILS
NAME:
Date of Birth
Class/Teacher

Dates of requested absence:
Date of return to school:
Reason for leave of absence request:

I understand that keeping my child off school if my request is not granted, will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised. This may result in a Penalty Notice being issued to me by the Local Authority for the non-attendance of my child at school.
Parent/Carer Name:
Relationship to child:
Signature:
Date of Request:

All information supporting your application for a leave of absence must be submitted along with your application to school. This includes any evidence supporting 'exceptional circumstances' for consideration by the head teacher. Any evidence submitted from an employer must be on letter headed paper and signed by your employer. Any supporting information submitted may be used as evidence should the case later proceed to court.

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